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THE Committee of Nineteen at Geneva is now engaged in drawing up its judgment on the Manchurian dispute. Japan has said "No" to every proposal or appeal for a settlement consonant with the recommendations of the Lytton Report, which, it will be remembered, would safeguard her rights as well as China's. There are a few days left in which she might change her mind; but no one imagines for a moment that she will do so. The immediate issue is, therefore, whether we are to have a clear insistence on respect for the Covenant and treaties, and a clear condemnation of violence and aggression, or an anaemic resolution which will in effect be a surrender to the Japanese claims. Those who want the former comprise the great majority of the States-members of the League, and unquestionably American opinion is with them. Great Britain hankers after the latter, and we may expect to see Sir John Simon continuing to fight for it. We hope that in his final effort to saddle this country and the world with a load of mischief, he will be in a minority of one—or one and a half, for Portugal has now, for some odd reason, come out on his side.

Who Are the Sentimentalists?

It is astonishing that the British Government and those who support them in Parliament and the press should be so blind to the consequences of their policy. These are the politicians and the journalists who are forever prating about our prestige and our interests. Yet few men have done more to lower our prestige and to jeopardise our interests than Sir John Simon by his fawning on Japan. We appear to the world either as cowards or as cynical abettors of violence. As for our interests, how can they be served by a Japanese triumph over the League? What hope is there this way of maintaining peace? And with war between China and Japan, what are the prospects for our trade in the Far East—what indeed are the odds against our being ourselves drawn into the vortex? Those who have stood for the principles of the League have been derided by the self-appointed champions of Japan as "idealists," fanatics crying "fiat justitia, ruat coelum." In fact they are realists, pointing out that, in this case at any rate, it is only the triumph of justice that will save the heavens from falling. The *Daily Mail* tells us that we must support our "loyal friends the Japanese." Here, indeed, is schoolgirl sentimentalism! For in return for that support we may count on Anglophobia in China, trade boycotts, more and not less armaments, dissensions with other Powers, notably the United States, and a grand fillip to militarism all over the globe. Are these British interests?

De Valera and Cosgrave

The Irish elections have passed with unusually little violence. As one well-known Irishman put it, when commenting on the silence of the gun-men, "when I hear of stone-throwing I feel that civilisation is really making progress in Ireland." First results may, of course, prove deceptive, but there is every appearance, as we go to press, that the forces of nationalism, as represented

by Mr. De Valera, have gained at the expense of Mr. Cosgrave's direct appeal to the pocket. In England sympathies are also divided between Mr. De Valera and Mr. Cosgrave, for though the defeat of Mr. De Valera would be extremely gratifying politically to the Government, it would create an awkward situation for our own economic nationalists. If Mr. Cosgrave is returned Ireland will have presumably to be brought into the Ottawa agreement, and then what becomes of the policy which aims at excluding foreign agricultural produce? From an economic point of view the British Government may well be indulging in secret prayers for the return of Mr. De Valera, whom politically they detest.

Fracas in France

France is in a pretty turmoil over M. Chéron's budget. His original proposals have been resolutely attacked by the Socialists and modified out of all recognition. Amongst what the parties of the Right call the new "Draconian measures" is the project of abolishing bearer bonds and compelling the holders of all securities to register their investments. The object of that is, of course, to prevent the evasion of income tax, which has always been practised on the grand scale in France. But it will also, they say on the Bourse, be a blow to business, and on Wednesday there was a protest strike engineered by the Paris stock-brokers' clerks, which brought all dealings to a standstill. Simultaneously there was another demonstration by an army of several thousands of peasant-farmers, who marched into Paris, came into conflict with the police at the Arc de Triomphe, and finally attempted an assault on the Chamber of Deputies. Their grievances are comprehensive—taxes old and new, the drop in the price of grain, the Government's agricultural policy. Rumour has it that the next to make trouble will be the civil servants' and ex-Servicemen's organisations. All this uproar can hardly be regarded as a prelude to a revolution; but, taken together with the furious opposition in Parliament, it shortens the odds on M. Paul-Boncour's Government surviving the crisis.

A Change of Policy in Russia

Those who know the situation in Russia—the shortage of food, the ca' canny of the peasants and the discontent on the collective farms—were disappointed by Stalin's speech a week or two ago. He denounced slackers, muddlers, wreckers, kulaks, and promised them short shrift. But this obviously was not going to the root of the trouble. Were those who asked for bread to be offered only purges and bullets? The answer was given a day or two later by Molotov, the head of the Government, who announced a change of policy which had been widely expected. The old system of requisitioning by the State of quotas of grain from the farms was a double grief to the peasants; it took too much from them and it took it at an unfairly—or what seemed an unfairly—low price. This is now to be replaced by a graduated tax in kind, and with that grievance removed, and with the right to dispose freely of the remainder of their produce, the peasants, it is hoped, will be placated and spurred to more strenuous efforts. A larger yield is sorely needed in agriculture, but it is not to be aimed at by any extension at present of the sowing area. One other matter of great importance which was stressed by Molotov was the more rapid development of light industry. Some steps have already been taken to increase the supply of consumers' goods, but they have got very little way towards making up the immense deficiency. To meet the demand for pots and pans and coats and boots and nails must be one of the principal tasks of the second Five Year Plan.

Barter in U.S.A.

The breakdown of the American financial system has led to many odd experiments in economics—especially in the West, where lack of confidence in the traditional orthodoxies makes men feel that even at the cost of violating sound finance it is well to keep alive. The first step was the creation—chiefly on the initiative of the unemployed themselves—of barter exchanges. In cities within easy reach of farm country an unused warehouse would be borrowed, also trucks to transport goods and workers. Men would then offer their labour to farmers in return for food. Cobblers would bring shoes, or do repair-work, in exchange for food. People with extra clothes or pieces of furniture would barter them for goods or services. In Dayton, Ohio, when a surplus of food had accumulated, the barter exchange was given the use of a cannery and put up thousands of tins against the winter. As the movement grew (it now involves about two million people from coast to coast), the need for a negotiable scrip was felt. Various experiments were made—all of them successful. The simplest of the scrips was that devised last summer by the Natural Development Association of Idaho. It is non-transferable and represents the exact value of the goods or services which the holder has exchanged for it. When the holder has used it to purchase goods or services from the Association the scrip is destroyed—so it cannot be monopolised or manipulated, or made a basis for usury.

* * *

A still more ingenious form of scrip is in use in other exchanges, making provision for paying the operating cost of the exchange. This scrip may be passed about as money; but it requires a two cent (or three cent) stamp to be affixed whenever it changes hands. When the value of the stamps is slightly in excess of the face value of the scrip, it is redeemed for a fresh certificate (or sometimes for cash), and the difference goes for operating costs. In certain towns (for example, Hawarden, Iowa) similar stamped scrip is used by the municipality to pay for public works undertaken to create employment. According to Professor Fisher, in the *New Republic*, the city accepts payments in this scrip, the local merchants accept it in exchange for their wares, and even one of the banks encourages its use. Each dollar's worth is redeemable when stamps to the value of a dollar and five cents have been affixed. The stamps are bought with real money, which supplies the city with a redemption fund. Elsewhere, stamped scrip is being used with the provision that a new stamp must be affixed every fortnight—the result being a speeding up of circulation, since each holder wishes to pass it on before he has to stamp it. An attempt is being made to get the Hawarden scrip adopted by the entire state of Iowa. . . . When to all this is added the fact that, according to the *Times*' Washington correspondent, 80 per cent. of the present Congress is inflationist, and a still higher percentage of the next is expected to be inflationist, it can be seen why the Eastern

money interests are frightened—and perhaps why such strong efforts are being made to lure England back to gold.

Dominion Currencies

South Africa's departure from the gold standard has been followed by New Zealand's action in deliberately lowering the value of her currency in terms of sterling. This step, which involved the resignation of the Finance Minister, was taken as the result of increasing pressure from the agricultural exporters. These complained of the advantage accruing to Australia from the lower valuation of her currency. The new rates put the New Zealand currency practically on a par with the Australian. In addition, of course, New Zealand has improved her competitive chances in the British market in relation to the Danes, the Dutch, and the other exporters who supply the same classes of goods as herself. She has done this at the cost of increasing the burden of her external debts, which are payable in sterling, and somewhat to the disadvantage of her Government and her own financiers. There was a strong case for bringing the New Zealand currency to parity with that of Australia; but there are clearly limits to the process by which one country after another seeks to improve its competitive position by depreciating its exchanges. Any gain secured in this way is bound to be at someone's expense, and sets up dangerous repercussions in the increase of debt burdens, as well as threats of retaliation from other countries whose markets are affected. To say this is not to criticise the New Zealanders, but to point out that there is no way to world recovery along this route.

The Bus Strike

The London omnibus strike was soon over—as soon as the Transport and General Workers' Union, which the swift spreading of the stoppage had taken by surprise, had time to mobilise its forces and order a return to work. The Union had no option, since there was an agreement on this subject with the Company last year, and it was admitted that the men on strike had failed to use the procedure accepted by both sides for the adjustment of disputes. The question at issue will now be investigated and dealt with in accordance with this procedure; and in all probability the public will neither hear nor care to hear any more about it. Nevertheless, the strike is not without importance. There has been of late a considerable speeding-up on a number of routes, and the strikers could argue with some effect that their protest against speeding-up was in the interests of public safety as well as of the men themselves. No doubt it is also true that the reason why the strike, purely local at the outset, spread so rapidly was that there had been a big accumulation of small grievances among the busmen. The L.G.O.C. is generally reckoned a good employer; and so it is, so far as wages are concerned. But it is also accustomed to exact a very rigid discipline in return for what it pays. Under such conditions an occasional spontaneous protest strike is to be expected, and may do more good than harm if it draws attention to the need for regarding men as human beings whose desires are not met by wages alone, but who are ready to resent being talked to, even by "good employers," in too dictatorial a tone.

Waterloo Bridge

The Waterloo Bridge controversy has become ridiculous, and it is to be hoped that the Government's present proposals for reconditioning the old bridge at the cost of £685,000 will go through without any more fuss. It seems to us perverse to argue that the process of corbelling out will spoil the appearance of the bridge, and it will make room for four lines of traffic—which is as much as the Strand will bear from that direction. Neither should Sir Percy Simmons's argument that the L.C.C. must have an assurance that Parliament will not turn down the scheme cause further delay, since the present House of Commons is altogether unlikely to refuse the Government scheme. Waterloo Bridge is not the most important building project awaiting national attention, but it is the most ludicrous example of vacillation, and we hope to see the end of the controversy and to keep the old bridge reconditioned for existing needs.

A National Housing Programme

We begin this week a series of articles dealing with the present housing situation. In our columns to-day Sir Ernest Simon discusses the housing proposals of the present Minister of Health and especially the folly of abandoning the Wheatley subsidy, and urges a vital amendment for his acceptance. Next week Mr. J. M. Keynes will deal with a proposal for establishing a National Housing Corporation. This proposal will be discussed in subsequent issues by Sir Raymond Unwin, President of the R.I.B.A. and the best known exponent of town-planning in this country, by Mr. Sprague, economic adviser to the Bank of England, by Sir Harold Bellman, Managing Director of the Abbey Road Building Society, and by Mr. R. Coppock, the General Secretary of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives. Amongst other well-known housing authorities who have promised to take part in this discussion are Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis, F.R.I.B.A., Dr. W. A. Robson and Mrs. John Barclay, F.S.I. We are prompted to open this wide field of discussion because we feel that the moment is peculiarly appropriate for urging a comprehensive and nationally planned housing and slum clearance programme. Materials and money are both cheap: the necessary funds are lying idle, waiting their opportunity; the need of houses is admittedly immense and urgent; there are signs on all sides that the tide of false "economy," perhaps more ludicrously misplaced in the realm of housing expenditure than anywhere else, has passed its flood. To face the housing and slum problem intelligently and boldly is the most pressing of domestic needs.

* * *

Many people who have hitherto supported the National Government's policy of economy are now beginning to realise how foolish and wasteful it is to create unemployment and reduce national purchasing power in a world suffering from over-production. We recommend these who are interested in this controversy to read the brief and lucid statement of the issues involved, of the effects of "economy" on the social services and the national life as a whole in the pamphlet on *Saving and Spending*, by Mr. G. D. H. Cole. This pamphlet has now been published by THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION at the price of sixpence.

WAR DEBTS AND THE FUTURE

THERE have been welcome signs during the past week of a real change in the American attitude on the question of war debts, and it is now practically certain that British negotiators will before long go to the United States to discuss not only the debts but also the prospects of close collaboration between the two countries in economic matters over a far wider field. Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hoover are at length acting together; and American opinion is beginning to accept the fact that the debt question is tangled up, not only with reparations, but also with the entire problem of world economic recovery. This is all to the good, since by far the best hopes of economic improvement can be opened up by joint action between ourselves and the United States. But it is necessary, even at this stage, to sound a note of warning. Even if war debts were wholly out of the way, it would be out of the question for Great Britain, in the present situation, to give any binding pledge to return to the gold standard. A return at the old parity is, of course, obviously impossible; even a return at a considerable devaluation of sterling would be at present most unwise. The mere removal of war debts would not guarantee us against a renewed silting up of gold in the United States and France, or against a run on the pound due to a withdrawal of short-term balances from the London market. If, then, the Americans try to make a pledge to restore gold payments a condition of settling war debts and collaborating in economic measures, our answer will have to be a decisive refusal to tie our own hands for the future. The settlement of war debts is not a case for any such *quid pro quo*, and it would not at all pay the Americans to insist on conditions which might easily bring about a fresh financial crisis.

It took the nations of Europe fourteen years to realise the disastrous futility of attempting to collect reparations from the German people. During those years the reparations question passed through many stages of absurdity, and in retrospect it is plain that the only periods during which Germany was paying over any considerable sums of money were those when she was borrowing from abroad the means to pay Indeed, from the inauguration of the Dawes Plan the Germans were receiving from abroad far more than they paid over in reparations; the foreign loans of those years were used not only to pay the Allies, but also for the reconstruction of German industry. When the flow of American capital to Europe abruptly ceased, the Young Plan was kept going for a time, partly by superhuman efforts on Germany's part to cut down imports and stimulate exports at the same time, and partly by short-term borrowing from foreign bankers, especially those of Great Britain. As soon as the Germans' "capacity to pay" ceased to be sustained by foreign loans of one sort or another, collapse followed as a matter of course; even if Germany had been in a position to produce a sufficient surplus of goods to pay reparations, the rest of the world would assuredly not have taken these goods in payment.

Long after all sensible people had realised the impossibility for Germany of keeping up her payments, the statesmen of Europe reluctantly agreed to recognise the obvious fact. The Lausanne settlement was the consequence. There was no question at Lausanne of the Allies magnanimously giving up payments which they could have exacted; by that time everyone knew that German payment was impossible. Nevertheless, the Lausanne settlement was made conditional on a corresponding settlement of the Allied debts to America, since it was impossible to get the French to sign away reparations on any other terms, and it was hoped that the conditional nature of the Lausanne settlement would make plain to the Americans the necessity of their falling into line. Everyone, however, knew that, whatever course America might take, Germany could never again successfully be called upon to pay. Lausanne did not settle the reparations question; it registered, hesitantly and conditionally, an accomplished fact. The Americans have been hitherto as reluctant to recognise realities as the nations of Europe were until last year. There are, of course, a number of people in the United States who see clearly that there is no chance of Europe's debts to America continuing to be paid, just as there were many people in Europe who saw the futility of reparations long before Lausanne. But the American Congress, like European public opinion until quite lately, is inclined to argue the case in terms of legalism and commercial morality rather than of pragmatic appeal to the actual circumstances of the time. "Europe has made a contract; let her abide by it." So says Congress; and so have said bankers and *rentiers* the world over when anyone has suggested that debt burdens ought to be scaled down in face of the fall in prices. "Europe can find money for armaments; then she can find money to pay us." So says Congress, morally justified, but ignoring the difference between internal expenditure and payments that have to be made abroad. "If the European taxpayer defaults, the American taxpayer, who is no less hard hit, will have to shoulder the burden." So says Congress, truly enough unless the American taxpayer simply refuses, and insists on shifting the burden on to the American *rentier* by scaling down the interest on the American internal debt. "Europe must pay, because we cannot afford to let her off." So says Congress; but the fatal weakness in the argument is that, whatever is said, Europe certainly will not pay.

It is perfectly true that Europe *can*, at a pinch, pay not only one instalment, but possibly the next and the next after that. These payments, in face of the American tariff, can be made only in gold; and there are obviously narrow limits to the total sum that can be paid in this way. It is often said that the gold can be of no conceivable use to the Americans, who have already more gold than they need; and in a national sense this is true enough. But the gold, however useless to the American banks or the American people, can, we must not forget, appear useful to the American Treasury, since it can serve to reduce the budget deficit and stave off the need for additional taxation. The American bankers do not want the gold; the Treasury and Congress may want it in order to relieve their own special financial difficulties.

The ability to pay in gold for some time to come applies, of course, particularly to France, with her huge gold reserve. A little more than a year ago there was a vast migration of gold from New York to Paris; and the Americans are inclined to say that, if the gold can move one way, there is nothing to stop it from moving back. This is true, if it were not for the attitude of the French people. For the gold belongs not to the French Government, but to the Bank of France and, in the final resort, to its depositors. In order to export this gold, the French Government would have to buy it from the Bank; that is to say, the French taxpayers would have to foot the bill. This, in face of the cessation of payments from Germany, they certainly will not do. For the French, with their great stock of gold, continued payment to America is not physically, but is politically, impossible. For us, with our far smaller

gold stock, the impossibility is physical as well as political.

The case might indeed be altered if two of the vital conditions of the problem were changed. *If* world prices rose very substantially, and *if* the Americans very greatly lowered their tariff on manufactured imports, Europe might in time recover some real ability to pay. Also, a spurious ability might be regained temporarily by a very large revival in American foreign lending. This last possibility can, however, be safely ruled out for the present. What of the other two? The Democrats are pledged to some lowering of the tariff on manufactures, probably to be offset by an increase in agricultural protectionism; but who expects from them, or regards as politically possible, a sufficient lowering to bring about any large recovery of Europe's power to pay in goods? This power must always remain largely indirect—in that it depends on Europe's power to export a surplus of manufactured goods to non-European countries which can pay by exporting a surplus of primary products to the United States. But in this form the ability to pay clearly depends on a world revival of trade, and above all on a real recovery in the United States, leading to a greatly increased demand for non-European imports. Such a recovery, either in the world as a whole or in the United States, depends on a sharp rise in prices.

We can hardly believe the report, which emanates from Washington as we write, that Mr. Hoover hopes to coerce us by a threat to raise the American tariff—and still less that Mr. Roosevelt would subscribe to such idiocy. There may be chagrin in the United States over Mr. Chamberlain's speech at Leeds; but it is surely patent that, in the last resort, Europe's capacity to meet in future any substantial part of the American debt charge depends on the success of world action to raise the level of world prices, coupled with a fall in the American tariff. If, then, the Americans demand to be paid at all, their one hope lies in international collaboration to raise the price-level—above all, in collaboration with Great Britain and the other countries of the "sterling group." If the Americans are prepared to join forces with us, both at the World Economic Conference and elsewhere, not only in pressing for an agreed world policy to raise prices, but also in announcing that we propose to act together with this object, in concert with such countries as agree, whatever France or any other dissentients may say, it will be well worth our while to avoid any act likely to make successful joint working psychologically impossible—though, of course, we *cannot* continue to pay future instalments of the debt—*cannot*, even if we would. On that ground, and on that ground alone, payment last December may have been worth while.

This, then, is the situation. There can be no question of Europe's ability to go on paying in full, even if prices can be brought back to a tolerable level—say, that of 1929; for the debt burden was already top-heavy long before the depression began, and full payment was made possible only by the reparations receipts, which the Americans were, in fact, lending to Germany. Even if prices rose, the debt payments would have to be drastically reduced—and would be far better totally abolished—in face of the disappearance of reparations. If prices are not successfully raised, a complete cessation of European payments is a matter, not of policy, but of sheer economic necessity; and the sooner the Americans recognise this truth, as Europe was forced to recognise it in the case of reparations, the better for all concerned.

It remains to add that, evidently, successful action to raise world prices is incompatible with the policies of "national economy" which the countries of the world are pursuing to-day. A rise in prices depends on a rise in demand; and, indeed, its object is to bring about a great increase in production and a consequent absorption of many of the unemployed. This cannot come about if Governments, and private persons following their example, deliberately restrict demand and so perpetuate the very conditions they profess to be trying to remedy. Concerted international action to raise prices implies and involves corresponding action to stimulate and develop industrial demand.

THE ANTI-HOUSING BILL

WHEN Sir Hilton Young introduced his new housing Bill in the House of Commons on December 15th, he said that the slum problem had hardly been scratched, that we wanted "a national effort to rid our social organism of radiating centres of depravity and disease." He wanted his Bill to be looked upon as "a declaration of war against the slums." He added that we had not sufficient small houses; that we wanted "the three bedroom non-parlour houses with a 760 sq. ft. area which could be let within the means of the lower paid wage earner." Altogether an admirable speech—the right aims; the right needs; plenty of enthusiasm. If fair words could abolish the slums, Sir Hilton Young's speech would have done it.

But what follows? The actual proposals of the Bill can only be described in the words used by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain of Gladstone's Education Bill—"a staggering disappointment." It is not too much to say that they threaten to bring to an end the great post-war housing campaign.

The best way in which I can make the position clear is to take the concrete case of the housing position in Manchester, with which I am most familiar.

Manchester has about 80,000 houses of the two-up and two-down type. They are by no means the worst type of slum; reconditioning was carried as far as is practicable in pre-war days, with the result that the back-to-back houses have been abolished, every house has a paved backyard, a water closet, and water laid on inside the house. These houses are let at from 5s. to 9s. inclusive. They are the old type, in long dreary rows, often damp, in bad repair and verminous, far below the modern standard of housing. But they have the one advantage of being so small that they are almost always occupied by one family only. The great majority of families in these houses can, and do, live self-respecting lives, though, of course, not fully healthy lives.

Unfortunately, there are in Manchester 10,000 surplus families for whom even such houses are not available. In spite of the rapid building during the last ten years, the number of surplus families has been increasing, and more and more old middle-class houses, quite good in themselves, are being let in furnished rooms. The pressure is such that a single room can be let at about 10s., and a profit of, say, £3 a week can be made on an eight-roomed house. The unscrupulous landlord buys a few scraps of furniture, including often some verminous bedding, and by calling the rooms furnished evades the Rent Restriction Act.

The conditions in these rooms are often frightful. In one case that was brought to my notice the other day there were eight families, totalling thirty persons, living in an eight-roomed house; and there are hundreds of equally bad cases. For a family with children in these furnished rooms, self-respect becomes almost impossible. Many inevitably give up the fight and become demoralised.

In these circumstances to pull down even the old two-up and two-down houses has the inevitable effect of driving more families into the appalling conditions of living in furnished rooms. Quite clearly the right thing is to continue the work which has gone on during the last ten years of building houses on the outskirts of the city in order to draw families out from the centre. If carried out steadily and at an accelerated rate

this would in a few years have the effect of reducing the pressure, so that there would be a number of vacant houses and all the families with children in furnished rooms could, at least, get into a two-up and two-down. At that point there would be enough houses, and the second stage of the war against the slums could begin. One bad old house to be pulled down for every new house built; that would be the real slum clearance stage. The important thing is to make it clear that to begin the *clearance* of slum houses before the *shortage* of houses is dealt with would mean a disastrous increase of the worst kind of overcrowding.

There are two Acts of Parliament in force at the present time which correspond to the two stages of the war against the slums. The Wheatley Act builds houses which should be let at reasonable rents to draw people out of the slums and to reduce overcrowding; the Greenwood Act builds similar houses with a slightly larger subsidy, but (except in the Improvement Areas) insists on the demolition of a slum house for every new house built. The Greenwood Act does not reduce overcrowding except in so far as it substitutes a larger house for a smaller one.

The facts I have given regarding Manchester are, I think, fairly typical of the large cities throughout the country. In the case of some of the larger cities (especially London) slum clearance and rebuilding are immediately necessary for geographical reasons. But in the case of all large towns I believe it is true to say that there is still a serious shortage of houses. In all towns, therefore, the continuance of the Wheatley Act is more important than the Greenwood Act.

What does Sir Hilton Young propose under these conditions? In the first place he encourages private enterprise to build houses to let. This is all to the good, and, so far as it is successful, is to be welcomed. But, first of all, it is doubtful how far, in fact, it will be successful; secondly, it is certain that private enterprise, without subsidy, cannot hope to let the right sort of houses at less than, say, 14s. a week.

The poorer section of the workers cannot, under existing economic conditions, pay more than the present slum rents of from 5s. to 9s. inclusive. Sir Hilton Young's method of meeting their needs is to abolish the Wheatley Act, which is more needed than ever, and to limit the working of the Greenwood Act to the paltry figure of 12,000 houses a year. Manchester's share of this would be 300 houses. The total number of new houses required before Manchester's slums and semi-slums are abolished is 90,000. Their recent building programme has been 3,000 Wheatley houses a year. The Manchester programme would have cleared the slums in one generation. Sir Hilton proposes to extend this to two or three centuries.

Is it too much to say that the Government Bill in its present form is not the beginning but the end of the national campaign against the slums?

There is only one ray of hope from the Government's proposals. Sir Hilton Young said that he would be glad if more than 12,000 houses could be built under the Greenwood Act. Under this Act it is possible to get the subsidy by moving an overcrowded family out of a so-called "improvement area" and building a new house. If the Government would approve of very large "improvement areas," and would allow the local authorities to get to work vigorously by bringing overcrowded families out into new houses to the extent of 100,000 houses a year, then his proposals, instead of being a catastrophe, would be warmly welcomed by housing reformers.

The only possible reason for Sir Hilton Young's housing legislation is economy. It is for the Government to decide whether, in the name of economy, they propose to condemn those who are at present living in unfit houses to remain there until a more humane Government comes into power. A simple amendment to the Government's Bill would convert it from a social catastrophe to a Bill which would play a real part in the ending of the disgrace of our slums. Let us hope that the Government may yet appreciate this, and act in time.

E. D. SIMON

A LONDON DIARY

CRICKET, traditionally our "national game," is obviously too dangerous as an international one. The Australians say that our bowling is "likely to upset the friendly relations between Australia and England" (not, mark you, between the teams, but between the countries themselves), and the M.C.C.'s reply, which seemed to me inoffensive enough, is said on the placards to have "staggered Australia." (Can't you see the stalwart farmers who have stood firm while markets rocked and prices crashed clutching at the furniture for support as they read the M.C.C.'s reply?) How thankful Lord Beaverbrook must be that the Canadians play baseball and the New Zealanders rugger! As soon as a game is professionalised and worked up as a best seller and an international event something of the psychology of war develops round it. The game disappears, and, splendid though the skill and endurance which remain may be, one can only say, "*C'est magnifique, mais c'est la guerre.*"

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A friend of mine who has lived much in Germany has just returned with some surprising examples of the change in German opinion. Only a few years ago Germany was still overwhelmingly anti-militarist: to-day Remarque, the author of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, has had to leave Germany, while Ludwig Renn (Captain Baron Veilth von Golsenau), who wrote *War*, was actually arrested shortly before Christmas on the charge of "Literarische Hochverrat"—"Literary High Treason"—for which surprising offence he is still in prison. Communists, who might not mind throwing bombs on occasion, are looked upon, it seems, with less disfavour now than pacifists. One of the leading German bookshops actually displays to-day, under the black, white and red flag of old Germany, a notice that no pacifist literature is stocked in the shop! Ufa films of Hugenberg, all drums and uniforms, are popular, while any remotely pacifist film is refused a licence. There is no longer any pretence that Germany is not re-arming. Vickers-Armstrongs' advertisements (which I have seen myself and have already mentioned here, and about which questions have since been asked in the House of Commons) appear openly in the German press, advertising weapons which by treaty Germany is not permitted to possess. Lord Melchett's Christmas visit to Berlin was welcomed by many people because it was openly said that he was able during his stay to convince his German friends of the reality of the new agreement between Imperial Chemicals and Vickers-Armstrong and to lay the basis for new and closer co-operation between the I.C.I. and L. G. Farben (the German counterpart of I.C.I.) on the matter of poison gas. I realise more than ever the courage shown by the German groups of "revolutionary pacifists" whose manifesto was published in the Correspondence columns of this journal on December 31st.

* * *

Meanwhile, by a grim irony, the French populace (whose traditional fear of Germany has always been given as the excuse for a policy which is mainly responsible for the growth of militarism in Germany) seems to be growing every day more pacific. M. Barbusse, whom I saw recently in London, gave me an impressive description of the growth, especially in the villages, of the anti-war movement which he is so largely responsible for organising in France. And Paris is apparently moving in the same direction, if I may judge from a first-hand account of the reception given to the present production of Aristophanes' *The Peace*, at the Théâtre de l'Atelier. M. Dullin not only is a brilliant producer and actor, but has a keen flair for the feelings of the public. This time he has backed extreme pacifism. M. François Porché has skilfully adapted the original, and twice during the play the actors come to the front of the stage and appeal to the public for help in the task of bringing peace to the earth. The audience responds with such vociferous enthusiasm that the play gets held up for several minutes at every performance. Trygaeus, the pro-

tagonist of *The Peace*, is a peasant, you remember, and his pacificism is of a sort particularly congenial to the French who even when they live in towns usually retain many links with the country, a sister with a little farm, a father who is a market gardener. When Aristophanes speaks with lovely lyricism of olive orchards and vineyards and rural prosperity, the French recognise his inspiration in their own experience, and the comedy expresses their profound longing to be left in peace to cultivate the land that they so jealously love.

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Mr. Neville Chamberlain's letter in the *Times* stating that he had seen a grey (not a pied) wagtail in St. James's Park throws a new light on his interests and character. Perhaps it was meant to do so. England is surely the only country in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the eve of an important speech on war debts, could write such a letter in the press. English politicians used to boast that they were by profession gentlemen and that politics was merely their hobby. Since that picture can no longer be supported they are at pains to let us know that even professional politicians can be gentlemen in their spare time. It is an amiable characteristic. Lord Grey set the example as an ornithologist; Mr. Baldwin as a literary connoisseur; Mr. MacDonald delivers speeches on architecture; and Mr. Winston Churchill is soldier, artist, writer and bricklayer. A "human note" of this kind is just what Mr. Neville Chamberlain needs now that he is in the running for the Premiership. Even in the dark days before the Budget he may say that he has seen a tail wagging somewhere.

* * *

Every time I come into contact with a group of the younger generation of Labour supporters I am impressed with the rapid change that is going on beneath the almost stagnant surface of the party. Recent visits to both the Oxford and Cambridge Labour Clubs have convinced me that the vehement repudiation of "gradualism" at the Leicester conference was not the mere petulance of defeat. In my days, just after the war, University Socialist societies and Labour clubs were either small discussion groups or large clubs in which experience could be gained for a political career. To-day in Oxford there is a large "October" Club, predominantly Communist, as well as an even larger Labour Club in which, judging from a meeting at which I was present last week, the members really mean business in quite a new sense. The dominant question I hear asked everywhere is this. Is it possible to carry out the kind of Socialist revolution we need without the violence of a Communist revolution? It is the interest in this question which crammed the hall at Transport House on Sunday night when Sir Charles Trevelyan began the new series of lectures arranged by the Socialist League. At next Sunday's meeting I see that Sir Stafford Cripps is speaking on this very question —"Can Socialism come by Constitutional Methods?"—and Sir Stafford Cripps is one of the leaders and perhaps *the* leader of the Labour Party of the future.

* * *

An unassuming and indeed enigmatic little paper called *Essential News* has just appeared. It costs fourpence a week and is published at 65 Portland Place, W.1. Its producers are so modest that they do not even explain who they are or what their paper is for. Actually it is the product of one of the "Z" societies inspired by H. G. Wells, about which there was correspondence following his article in this journal last August. The notion of collecting extracts from the world's press illustrating the facts of "poverty in the midst of plenty" is a good one. But to gain any considerable circulation and influence I think *Essential News* must decide more definitely on a principle of selection and let its public know what the principle is. British news might be almost entirely omitted from a publication of this kind: there is, I think, a small but influential public which would be interested in a well-selected résumé of the quoted foreign press. Many people, for instance, would be interested just now in a publication which summarised Middle and Far Western American opinion on war debts.

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Referring to the difficulties of the League in the Sino-Japanese conflict the *Times* speaks of "*the temporary refusal of the two parties to be reconciled.*" Surely this is the perfect euphemism for the invasion of one country by another.

* * *

Unemployment is due in large measure to the efficiency of machines, and it will be a very difficult thing to avoid that. We cannot arrest the progress of efficiency, but I think some agreement might be reached at Geneva or elsewhere by England, America, France, Japan, Germany, etc., not to grant any more patents for ten years. That would tend to stop the progress of machinery.—From the newspaper report of a speech by Sir William Wayland, M.P.

* * *

The seventeen expeditions undertaken by the Navy during the past two years were all errands of mercy . . . Another curious phenomenon was that during the past fifteen years there had been an international agitation against the British Navy. But of all the forms of force that Providence put into the hands of a country, the most merciful was the Navy . . . *The Navy was incapable of offence in what might be called an offensive manner.*—From the press report of a speech by Capt. Bernard Acworth, D.S.O., R.N., naval correspondent to the *Morning Post*.

CRITIC

A BLACK YEAR FOR AGRICULTURE

THE year 1932 opened with Sir John Gilmour at the Ministry of Agriculture, a placid, genial man, well spoken of by those who serve him, and entirely free from any suspicion of force or initiative. From the countryside went up a confused murmur of alarm and complaint; arable farmers were at their last gasp. Stock farmers were better off, only because their wages bill was less; action was unavoidable.

Something has been done. The guarantee for wheat has been made effective, money spent on our prime cereal will at least benefit Englishmen; one would not be prepared to say the same about the millions lavished on the beet subsidy. We have seen an extension of the National Mark; pig experts have met in council. The producer and the vendor of milk have had yet another of their unedifying squabbles, and the farmer seems to have held some of his own. But, of a comprehensive, all-embracing system of food production, of the kind that Signor Mussolini imposed upon the Italian farmer in order to reduce if not to extinguish payment to the foreign producer, we see in January, 1933, no sign. Apparently the conflicting interests are too many, the problems that beset the Cabinet too vast, for a vital agricultural policy to be evolved and pursued; the root of the matter is not in this Government.

For many years past I have toured agricultural England, with Scotland and Wales added if time permitted. In 1932 the tour was limited to England, where I saw more derelict land and broken farmers than I have seen throughout Great Britain in other years. Unemployment has overtaken thousands of agricultural labourers; the ratepayers must support them and pay the foreigner for the food they could have supplied. Acres past numbering have been given over to weeds and waste, their actual market value to-day being less than the sum required to bring them back into fertility. All this sacrifice is for the sake of a diminishing mercantile marine, for the benefit of business and financial interests concerned with the carriage and manipulation of food, and, above all, to avoid any approach to State control. This country in the hour of its necessity is left to derive what benefit it may from a series of plans and arrangements, excellent in themselves, but completely divorced from the state of emergency in which we live to-day. By reason of the vast sums we pay for supplies that we have both the men and the land to produce, we are keeping the Budget unbalanced and loading the national back with burdens almost too heavy to be borne. Downing Street is impotent, and when we consider the variety and the extent of the problems before our Cabinet there is small reason for surprise. Only those free from the burden of office see clearly. From Churt, Mr. Lloyd George, who has the most varied

political experience of any living statesman, has read and interpreted the writing on the wall.

If it be reasonable to praise the Government for having recognised the plight of the farmers, they must surely answer to the charge of having overlooked the claims of agriculture. A year ago they knew, even as the man in the street knew, that there was a strenuous and difficult time before us. Now, as another year dawns, the prospects are certainly no brighter, in spite of the surrender to tariffs. With all the assets that land, labour, machinery, markets and experience provide, we are still forced to spend at least four million pounds a week on food that could be grown on our neglected acres by competent men, who at present are in receipt of dole or poor law relief. This is the basic fact, and it is not by marketing schemes, large or small, nor by pig councils, eminent or eloquent, nor by restriction of imports, nor by bounties on wheat that the resultant problem can be met. Agriculture can be saved by the State, and the State saved by agriculture; and if there is any matter for congratulation in the happenings of the past twelve months it is that the truth is slowly but surely entering men's minds. The position that persists to-day is founded chiefly on the fear of "Whitehall interference." The ordinary dyed-in-the-wool Conservative, even though he be a farmer who could not to-day pay 10s. in the pound, feels safer in his insolvency and independence than he would if he were under control for the benefit of the nation, and for his own security. He may know that the path to prosperity leads by the way of compulsion, but the idea is repellent to him; he has been taught that State "interference" is to be avoided at any price. The fact that it saved agriculture in the war years has passed him by. He has even forgotten the extent of the nation's resources in the matter of food production. How long he will continue to avoid the logic of hard facts remains to be seen, and how the State is to steer successfully between food taxes and profiteering is further matter for wonder. Signs are not wanting that when certain ugly facts still hidden are exposed to view the imperative necessity of home food production will be recognised. Then the revolt against control of an industry which is notoriously incapable of controlling itself should be short-lived. At best the agitation has no more than a political beginning, middle and end.

During 1932 five Acts dealing wholly or partly with agriculture were passed. The Statutory Rules and Orders numbered over seventy, but in spite of all this parliamentary activity British agriculture remains an unsolved problem. The reason is clear. Everybody in authority approaches the question from the angle of political expediency. Those who assume an authority they do not possess suffer from the same complaint. Either they are for the farmer, and demand larger measures of protection, or they are for the townsman, and demand what they are pleased to call free trade, though the only freedom that really attaches to it is that which is given to middle men, combines, trusts, and similar organisations to exploit the farmer at one end of the scale, and the consumer at the other. Everything done in the past year has created ill-feeling and aroused controversy. The farmers are not satisfied; tariffs raise the price of feeding stuffs, tithe strangles the smaller men. On the other hand, the townsman is still exploited. Fish, fruit, vegetables are sacrificed to keep up prices, and, at a time when there is more wheat in the world than people can consume, the price of bread remains at a figure that little less than a shortage would justify. Even the poultry trade is suffering, after a brief term of prosperity. Protectionists declare that foreign eggs are the cause of the trouble, but while new-laid eggs, sold off the farm, fetch fifteen-pence a dozen in the market, the charge for the same eggs, often with the bloom off, is two shillings and sixpence per dozen in the shops. Is this spread due to free trade or profiteering, and will restrictions end or develop the scandal?

We do not suffer from lack of knowledge so much as from the reluctance of statesmen—Cabinet Ministers would perhaps be the better term—to turn it to good account. Rumour says that Major Elliot is quite capable of producing a National Plan, but he must move warily, because, as an eminent Conservative said to the writer only a few weeks ago, "Elliot is a good man, but he has too much imagination to be a safe Minister!"

Agricultural reform in this country, very little helped by the five Acts, and the seventy odd Statutory Rules and Orders, demands clear thinking and plain speaking. In the first place, a sufficiently comprehensive survey is called for, and then the question of the right size of farms should be considered. The majority of our holdings in this country are no longer economic, and in all probability there is room to-day for two types only, the cottage or smallholding and the large farm. Areas of one hundred to two hundred acres—and their name is legion—are out of date. They could only compete while the country depended upon manual labour. So soon as mechanised farming was introduced their time was up. Who in authority will say so much, and call upon his head the wrath of the National Farmers' Union, whose members are so largely representative of the uneconomic holding and the unintelligent majority? It is vain to subsidise sugar beet—chiefly for the benefit of foreign financiers—and to pass Agricultural Credits, Horticultural Products, Ottawa Wheat Agreements, Import Duties and Destructive Imported Animals Acts. They will not turn the uneconomic unit into an economic one, nor may they help for long the farmer who cannot carry the necessary machinery nor employ the adequate staff. It is in part because their unit is ineffective that so many farmers to-day are unable to meet their wages bill. For the rest of their troubles the market manipulation of their produce is responsible—

When food has left the farmer anybody can make money out of it.

If the State would take its courage in both hands, and would act, not only could it organise farming, but it could make us self-supporting in a very little while. One reads all manner of statements to the effect that this is not a wheat-producing country; certainly we have lost three-quarters of a million arable acres in ten years. But England is one of the best wheat-growing countries in the world, and raises the largest measure to the acre. Under proper conditions wheat can be produced to a far larger extent than in 1918, because to-day the machinery available makes the farmer almost independent of the weather. Wheat controlled from field to table, and produced under modern conditions on all suitable land—a survey would give the necessary information—could pay the farmer and give the consumer a sixpenny loaf.

The meat position is as confused as any other. So soon as restrictions were announced prices fell in the exporting countries, and were raised over here. It was market manipulation and nothing else, the big interests combining to make money out of the state of confusion. To-day, English bullocks do not fetch fivepence a pound on the hoof. It is abundantly clear that the general effect of restriction will be increased profit for the market manipulators, because the State lacks the courage to control the interests that are really in charge of the nation's food. These interests stand for votes.

Agricultural prosperity for the sake of the farmer is not an ideal that can win or even deserve wide acceptance. There is no reason why the farm should be more prosperous than the factory, nor why it should enjoy special favoured-nation treatment, except in so far as a prosperous agriculture is a very present national need. The well-being of the farmer is necessary only so far as it is essential to the country. The whole question properly considered is not one of the conflicting urban and rural claims, because these claims do not really conflict. When we have a prosperous agriculture the pressure on the urban industrial market will be lightened, the burden of imports reduced, and both of these conditions will be excellent for the townsman, whose factories will find they have for clients the reawakened villages and country towns. For the great majority who take part in the town and country rivalries the outlook is limited by party, nor are there wanting powerful interests that seek to obscure the larger view. It is on account of this obscurity that so many people are content

with limited progress and think that if there are a sufficient number of trifling enactments the hour will strike when British agriculture will be suddenly rehabilitated. Against this false view one must protest. S. L. B.

FINGER-PRINTS

IT always seems odd to me that any man who has not committed a crime and has no intention of committing a crime should object to having his finger-prints taken. Some people would probably say that any prisoner who puts up a fight with the police rather than have his finger-prints taken shows by doing so that he has a bad record or, at least, a bad conscience; but I doubt this. For many people who have never been in the hands of the police and who can never by any possibility fall into the hands of the police have an equal horror of confiding the whorls on the points of their fingers to a reference-book at Scotland Yard. There is never a suggestion made in a newspaper that we should all have our finger-prints taken but some lover of liberty writes a violent protest against the outrage. I have myself no strong feeling one way or the other, but I am curious as to the reason for this obviously deep-rooted feeling. If it were based on the theory that finger-prints are untrustworthy as evidence, and that reliance on finger-prints might lead to the Archbishop of Canterbury's being convicted of holding up a bank-clerk, the objection would be as rational as it would be insurmountable. Many people, however, I fancy, would be equally dogged objectors, even if they believed finger-prints to be an absolutely infallible method of identification.

Probably, it is the association of finger-prints with crime that makes the ordinary virtuous citizen wish to have nothing to do with them. He feels that the police are paid to find things out about burglars and murderers, and not to examine the finger-ends of decent people like himself. To deposit his finger-prints at Scotland Yard would seem to him to brand him as a potential criminal. Besides this, he loaths the prying eye of that cold monster, the State. Man—at least in England—has always hated the State. He believes in the State as an instrument for keeping other people in order, but he holds that it should keep its fingers out of his own affairs. He bitterly resented the Income Tax when it was first imposed, because it gave the State the right to ask him how much money he was earning—a fact which he sometimes kept secret even from his wife and children. Here was an inquisition as intolerable as, if less bloodthirsty than, the Spanish. If the State had the right to ask an Englishman how much money he was making, where was the liberty for which Pym and Hampden, and so on, had fought and—some of them—died? I myself hold the opinion that every citizen should be compelled to declare his income for all to see on a tablet under the number of his house; but few Englishmen would agree with me. Even though the Income Tax authorities know, and the bank-manager knows, the ordinary Englishman does not like his neighbours to know exactly how much money he possesses. It is his secret, and strangers have no right to be inquisitive. Never is the Englishman more strong and silent than when hiding the truth about his income.

His dislike of State inquisitiveness was equally manifest when in the middle of the eighteenth century it was first proposed to take a census of the population. This proposal was vehemently attacked as "subversive of the last remains of English liberty," and the orthodox lovers of liberty recalled in support of their arguments the disasters that befell the Israelites as the result of a census taken in the reign of King David. The census, which to us to-day seems so innocuous and useful a method of acquiring information, savoured in those days both of tyranny and of atheism. There are still, I believe, a few who detest it; apparently, there are women who object as strongly to confiding their ages to a government department as most women object to confiding their ages to the readers of *Who's Who*. Acquiescent though the majority of Englishmen have become in the silken tyranny of the census, however, there were limits beyond which they would not permit the Paul-Pryism of the State to go. We consent to tell the State, they said, our ages, our birthplaces, our occupations, our matrimonial affairs, and the names and number of our children; but never on any consideration will we allow the State to ask us questions about our religion. There is an old hymn which begins with the line: "Ashamed to be a Christian?" and suggests that a good man, instead of keeping quiet about his religion, ought to be anxious to proclaim it whenever possible. I do not know whether the Englishman would have objected to proclaiming himself a Christian on the census-paper; but, undoubtedly, he was ashamed, for census purposes, to be an Anglican, or a Methodist, or a Plymouth Brother. To answer questions about his religious denomination would have been to surrender the last liberties of his soul. At the same time, realising that while liberty was important to Englishmen, it was of little importance to Irishmen, he passed a law which compelled the Irishman to answer the questions which would have subverted English freedom. My English friends may be horrified to learn that as a child I suffered the ignominy of having to confess—through my father—my religion to the authorities of Dublin Castle. Yet in Belfast we were accustomed to boast of the liberties that we had won at the Battle of the Boyne—liberties for which, we gathered, our fathers had been fighting and bleeding from time immemorial. It is all the stranger that nobody seems to have thought of leading a bloody rebellion against the religious census. It was taken every ten years, and nobody, so far as I have discovered, was a penny the worse.

Since that time, how many violations of liberty we have seen in these islands! And the violations that did not matter have been resented no less than the violations that did. I remember the flushed fury of a Surrey landlady during the war when the sale of sugar was restricted and she learnt that she would have to present a coupon at the grocers to obtain her weekly share. "I'd rather go without," she declared indignantly, and she set off at the earliest possible moment to obtain her ration-card. She was all for conscription, but how dare the State come between her and her sugar. "They used to say England was a free country," she would say gloomily, after the butcher had supplied her with a dismally small chunk of rationed meat, and, within a few minutes, she would launch out into an attack on conscientious objectors. "Isn't England their country as well as ours?" she would ask. "Why don't they go out and fight for it?" Conscripts and conscientious objectors little knew what we who remained at so-called liberty during the war had to endure. We were compelled to draw the curtains in our sitting-rooms at night. We were followed by coast-watchers along seaside cliffs who looked at us suspiciously, and insolently asked us if we had cameras. If we wanted a little more butter than the law allowed us, we had to smuggle it from a farmhouse, risking exposure and a fine if we were captured with the stuff in our possession. We had to beg our butchers for offals to supplement the meagre ration of food that was given to us in exchange for our coupons. Some of us had to stand naked before army doctors, like cattle in a market whom nobody wanted even as a gift. Liberty! Let me tell those young people, who believe it would be a violation of their liberty for the police to take their finger-prints, that there were days during the war when I would gladly have given my finger-prints for the leg of a wild rabbit.

At the present time, I am willing to give my finger-prints to any policeman who wants them. I have surrendered far more vital liberties than the liberty to keep my finger-prints a secret. Did not the War Office make a record even of the moles on my body? Does not the Foreign Office possess my passport photograph—not an ideal means of identification perhaps, but intended as such? Does not the Chancellor of the Exchequer know my income, and the County Council the horse-power and the colour of my car? Some public body even asked me a few years ago the number of rooms in

my house. I cannot go to the United States without somebody's asking me whether I am a bigamist.

If I go abroad and return to England, I am met by inquisitive men who turn over the contents of my bags in search of silk stockings and cocaine. Never before was such spying known in the history of civilised man. Wherever one goes one feels that one is being watched by an eye like the dreadful Masonic eye that never shuts on the signboard of some public houses. I have known children who were terrified of that eye, which might give even a nervous adult the feeling that he was a ticket-of-leave man with detectives following him. The State has become a huge detective-force, and we are all being followed. I sometimes feel like crying out to it: "For heaven's sake take my finger prints if you want them but stop following me, and stop pestering me with questions." Readily will I give my finger-prints to any Government that will give me in exchange the lost liberty to buy cigarettes when I need them, and to drink beer instead of tea during an afternoon walk in the country. I never take an afternoon walk in the country, or drink beer at tea time, but I want back my liberty. I do not, on the other hand, want the liberty to keep my finger-prints out of the hands of the police. If ever I commit a crime, I will see to it that there are no finger-prints left to show who did it. Y. Y.

PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURE

WITHIN the League two schools of thought, we're told,
Two rival theories of its task unfold.
One, thinking "safety first" the surer game,
Takes pure conciliation for its aim;
The other urges it to arbitrate,
Then brings strong pressure on the guiltier State.
But now, this little friction with Japan
Has brought to birth a third, and subtler plan,
Combining, by a happy inspiration,
At once coercion and conciliation.
A "formula" is found which recommends
The aggrieved and the aggressor to be friends.
Should both of them refuse, the veriest dunce
Will own we can't conciliate both at once;
While pressure is more easily applied
Not to the guiltier but the weaker side.
Yet something must be done; for we should strive
To keep "the League machinery" alive
For show, if not for use: so we prepare
A document that, with impartial care,
Conciliates the wrongdoer, by pursuing
A polished reticence towards his wrong-doing;
Then, if he still object to our report,
Rewrite it as may please him best—in short,
Grant the offender to coerce the Court;
And keep the League "in being," at the cost
Of nothing, so to speak, save honour lost.

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

UNEMPLOYMENT

SIR,—To those responsible for the consideration of ideas for the alleviation of unemployment I would respectfully suggest that a scheme modelled somewhat on the following lines would—without any extra expenditure by the Government—bring about not only a considerable reduction in unemployment but also an immense saving to the Unemployment Fund.

The gist of my idea is that the Labour Exchange should offer the unemployed to Municipal and Public Authorities promoting useful and revenue producing schemes at half the cost of maintaining such unemployed on the "dole."

To make this clear let me take an example—the average labourer receives a "dole" of, say, 25s. per week. The same labourer in employment would draw in wages something like £2 10s. per week. Towards this £2 10s. the Labour Exchange would, therefore, contribute 12s. 6d., or half what he would receive if he were still on their books, or, in other words, their contribution would be 25 per cent. of his wages.

Let me assume that a Public Authority is promoting a scheme estimated to cost £30,000. It is usually found that in such schemes one-half the cost is *labour*, and the other half *materials*. In this case, therefore, the total paid in labour or wages would amount to £15,000, and make the total contribution from the Labour Exchange towards the whole scheme 12½ per cent., or a sum of £3,750. It must be remembered, however, that immediately an unemployed person secures employment he automatically becomes a contributor to the Unemployment Fund, and, therefore, the actual cost to the Labour Exchange is reduced by the amount of his and the employer's contribution.

The actual saving, therefore, to the Labour Exchange becomes 12s. 6d. plus 1s. 8d., or 14s. 2d. for every man employed while the scheme is in progress, or a saving of £4,250 to the Unemployment Fund for an advance of £3,750, and this without taking into consideration the additional contributions from employers and employees concerned in the production of £15,000 worth of materials for the same scheme. It is obvious from the above figures that even more than a 50 per cent. advance from the "dole" payments could be offered and still bring about a saving to the Unemployment Fund.

All contracts under this scheme could be competed for in the ordinary way, the only obligation on the contractor being that he should draw his labour from the Labour Exchange. He would pay the standard rate of wages to his workmen, and the Public Authority would collect the Labour Exchange contribution. By letting the work to a contractor it would be carried out in the cheapest possible way and the best value obtained from the labour employed. The indirect results from an increase in employment would be great. Schemes put into operation would create a demand for materials, the production of which would also create work. Moreover, the labourer with his standard wage would have an increased spending capacity and trade generally would, in consequence, improve.

To keep a man on the "dole" without some scheme to utilise usefully the services which he longs to give is a state of things which cannot last indefinitely, and meantime—and perhaps this is the saddest aspect of the whole problem—there is the deterioration of labour due to its enforced idleness.

60 Queen Square, Bristol. J. BREBNER

[This variant of the Melchett Scheme seems to be free from many of the objections to that scheme—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

REBUILDING ENGLAND

SIR,—I venture to ask whether England is really equipped to reap her full share of the new prosperity which the prophets, including Lord Snowden, foreshadow. I ask in no churlish spirit; I ask only that my own faith may be strengthened.

I am told that very many of our factories date from the period between 1840 and 1870; that they are, therefore, not designed to allow the full play of what in the United States has come to be called "technocracy"; that the new and modern factories, enjoying most ample and lightsome floor space and devised to allow efficient production and administration, definitely reduce costs; that in Lancashire, for example, only very few cotton mills have been built since the war; that the physical fabric and framework, so to speak, of a factory are beginning to be understood as vital in any up-to-date plans of competitive output.

I give the information just as I have received it. Can it be that Britain needs to be rebuilt, industrially? And, if so, isn't now the time to begin, when building costs are low?

53 Broad Street, Birmingham. S. MCPHERSON

TECHNOCRACY

SIR,—May I correct "Critic's" suggestion that Technocracy's "constructive scheme appears . . . to be similar to Major Douglas's much-debated proposals"? The position is rather the reverse. Where Major Douglas and Technocracy completely agree is in their analysis of the consequences of orthodox financing and operating of the industrial machines. Their conclusions may be summarised as follows:—

(1) The displacement of human labour makes inevitable a

shortage of purchasing power—the " wages " of machines are not distributed.

(2) Capital appreciation is so financed that it appears as a debt against the community, who never obtain the means to liquidate it.

(3) The price system consequently fails to reflect economic reality, and there arises a necessity for the distribution of incomes by some device other than wages and salaries.

To those of us who have found that what appeared to be an unanswerable case has for some fourteen years (Douglas's first book appeared in 1918) been treated by professional economists as beneath their notice and not even worth their while to understand, the present public interest is refreshing. During these years we have seen every Douglas prediction justified by the event. In those days immediately following the war, when the support of all parties was given to the policy of " Produce More," Major Douglas said that the inevitable consequences of such a policy was distribution collapse, and the beginning of the worst was predicted in 1929 ! Few then took any notice ; now that the worst is upon us they are beginning to pay attention.

Technocracy has merely proved in figures what Major Douglas proved theoretically, and I may here reveal the fact that it was largely because of his contentions, supported by Mr. A. R. Orage, that Technocracy set to work.

At the moment, however, the British Social Credit movement stands aloof from the Technocracy practical scheme as distinct from the analysis, on the grounds that it appears to propose an autocracy of engineers rather than a democracy of consumers. Personally I believe, for reasons for which I must not intrude upon your space to expound, that the difference on the points at issue will quickly be resolved. J. A. FRANKLIN

" Purbeck View,"
Sandbourne Road, Bournemouth.

THE HEATH NURSERY SCHOOL

SIR,—An injunction was granted in the High Court of Chancery on Wednesday the 18th inst. against a nursery school in Hampstead to a private individual who had claimed to have the principal restrained from conducting the nursery school as it had been conducted up to the granting of the injunction. The Judge's decision carries with it certain serious implications as regards all schools, but more particularly nursery schools, and sets a dangerous precedent. As was clearly shown in the course of the action, schools have so far been protected against the possible attacks of neighbours, who must inevitably find the proximity of a school annoying, by a ruling that a school, provided it be *well conducted*, cannot in law be considered an actionable nuisance.

This ruling now, apparently, is no longer to hold, inasmuch as this nursery school was admitted by the Judge to be extremely well conducted. The evidence also showed that it was conducted in the same way as most other nursery schools, and with no more noise than in others or than is reasonably to be expected in schools for small children between the ages of two and seven. It is also important to note that the school has been inspected and approved of by the Board of Education. Is the net result of the injunction, therefore, that all nursery schools are actionable nuisances liable to have injunctions granted against them if they happen to have a neighbour who objects strongly to the noise small children make ? And does it also follow that all schools which can be proved to cause as much noise as a nursery school can be held to be actionable nuisances ?

Is the progress of education in this country to be restricted and even prevented by the law ? Are our schools, and particularly our progressive schools, to be at the mercy of the prejudices of private individuals ? A NURSERY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

THE LANE PICTURES

SIR,—If Mr. E. N. Mozley's pride in being an Englishman is liable to be upset by the happenings he mentions in your current issue, it is astonishing that he has managed to keep it, as he says, for most of his life. May I try to restore it, as far at least as the Lane pictures are concerned ?

The English Government has really acted quite properly in this affair. The disposition of a man's property after his death is not a matter of absolute right or " natural " justice, but depends solely on the law of the country where the property happens to be. Our law gives the primary claim (subject to death duties !) to certain of the deceased's family or relatives. This claim may be negatived or varied in favour of other persons, but only by a particular means. In the nature of things, a document attested by two witnesses has no more sanctity than a document attested by one or by none, or than a verbal wish, but no more does " natural " justice inevitably require that the law should fulfil an intention expressed at five minutes past twelve rather than one expressed at twelve o'clock. In fact, a man who knows that a testator once intended to benefit him usually feels bitterly aggrieved if he learns that the intention was afterwards changed. Now " England " and " Ireland " (to follow Mr. Mozley's personifications) both claim the Lane pictures. Each can allege in her favour the deceased's intention, but the former has the law on her side as well. " When the equities are equal the law prevails " is a long-established maxim. It would, therefore, be grossly unfair if a special Act of Parliament were passed (I presume this would be necessary) annulling the right of " England " to the pictures and bestowing them upon " Ireland." Amend the Wills Act by all means, if that seems beneficial for the future, but retrospective legislation to take away an existing right should not be thought of.

Any lawyer will tell Mr. Mozley that it is the commonest thing in the world for people to leave behind them documents that, through ignorance or carelessness, are legal nullities. In order that ideal justice may be done ought a special Act of Parliament to be passed in each case to give them validity ?

49 Princes Square, W.2. J. R. A. BRADLEY

REVIEWERS IN JEOPARDY

SIR,—I rise with alarm from studying the publishers' announcements in one of to-day's Sunday newspapers. May I ask whether nothing can be done to mitigate the dangers to which, apparently, the professional book reviewers are being continually exposed by reason of the extraordinarily high level of contemporary English literature ? These dangers, both mental and physical, seem to be reaching a pitch that would hardly be tolerated in any properly controlled trade or vocation.

It may be all very well, for instance, if Mr. I—— " enjoys immoderately every page " of a book. But real danger is surely threatening Dr. C——, for whom another novel " throbs with an immense vitality ; the final crisis is terrific ; a superb, oh ! an overwhelming book—I simply could not lay it down." Or take Miss B——'s case. She not only declares that the same " work of genius " purges her soul with pity and terror, but confesses that " excitement is a word too pale and too cheap for the throbbing anguish one experiences as one reads this tale." Even one of your own reviewers, Sir, is " carried on as by an avalanche," no less. Again, another martyr finds it " irritating " to have to lay a book aside " even in order to eat a meal," while Mr. S—— declares that he lost three hours' sleep in his "determination to begin the next day with the problem well and truly solved." And of yet another novel, Miss H—— admits that it " nearly cost me my life, as I found myself unable to abandon Prince Philip while crossing the King's Road."

In short, one single issue of one single newspaper shows us these ladies and gentlemen exposed, week in, week out, to insomnia, starvation, neurasthenia and sudden death. Is this credible ?

Savile Club, HAMISH MILES
69 Brook Street, W.1.

YOUTH HOSTELS FOR LONDON

SIR,—We are greatly concerned to establish one or more Youth Hostels in the Metropolis to afford the young folk living in the provinces and across seas the opportunity of visiting our great city with its wonderful array of interests.

At present this is not practicable owing to the prohibitive cost—not of living, but of lodging. We badly need Youth Hostels where for a modest shilling a clean comfortable bed, with washing accommodation and the possibility of very simple meals at, say, another shilling each, can be provided. Obviously this is not an economic proposition, but it is one nevertheless that has been realised in nearly all the capitals of Europe by the gift of suitable premises, or even to the turning to account of premises otherwise unused and adapting them for this purpose.

After the war Cologne had on its hands some huge barracks in the heart of the city. A tempting offer to convert them into a factory was turned down in favour of making them into a big Youth Hostel. Already this Hostel has given welcome to thousands of young Britishers who have stayed there on their travels. London should have similar facilities to offer young people.

I write this in the hope that some of your readers interested in the project can suggest ways and means of discovering a suitable building. A disused factory, school, or other commodious building could be turned to account, and funds for furnishing would soon be forthcoming. The building must be near the centre of London.

19 Sydenham Hill, S.E.26. T. ARTHUR LEONARD,
Vice-President, Youth Hostels Association

COVENT GARDEN OPERA HOUSE

SIR,—The heretical remarks made by your correspondent favouring the demolition of the Opera House cause one immediately to visualise Nash's Regent Street and what it now is. The acoustics, dignity and beauty of the Opera House remain one of the few heritages of bygone London; must that, too, be sacrificed to the already large and foul market? And because its seats are not all of plush, this could probably be remedied if the gallery-ites petitioned Colonel Blois. Surely the saving of the Opera House is worthy of a debate in the House, and is of more consequence than the importation of Tabasco sauce?

30 Henrietta Street, W.C.2. B. VAN THAL

PUBLISHING IN CANADA

SIR,—A very serious situation exists in Canada as a result of the custom of British authors or publishers selling Canadian rights for new books to U.S.A. publishers. The following chance examples will illustrate the effects:

	Retail Price: Canada.	England.
A Room of One's Own	$2.00 — more than 10/–	5/–
Narrow Corner	2.50	13/– 7/6
As We Are	4.00	21/– 15/–
Letters of D. H. Lawrence	6.00	31/6 21/–
Essays in Persuasion	2.75	14/– 10/6
Guide Through World Chaos	3.00	15/6 5/–
Golden Horn (Bloody Years Here) ...	3.00	15/6 8/6

The selling rights to Canadian publishers one cannot complain of so freely, but the small market leads to these results:

Faraway	3.00	15/6 10/6
Flowering Wilderness	2.50	13/– 7/6

The duty on British books is about to disappear, and this would seem an excellent opportunity to flood Canada from England and destroy the very strong American influence on general reading in Canada. C. A. ASHLEY

University of Toronto.

THESE FOREIGNERS

SIR,—It has always been England's misfortune that her discoveries in every field, from Art to Warfare, should have been borrowed and adapted to base usage by the foreigner. It was, therefore, with more a thrill of horror than with a shock of surprise that I learnt from a B.B.C. talk on Russia, uttered almost casually and without comment by some professor or other, that the seeds from which Bolshevism sprang are lying dormant in the heart of our own country! I refer to the ominous fact that Karl Marx studied his theories in the Reading Room of the British Museum, and it was there that Lenin prepared his fertile brain to nourish those germs which have now come to such a prodigious and terrible fruition.

I do not go so far as to demand, for the sake of national security, the complete destruction of the Museum Library. I urge instead, since other sections must be of value, that the latent seeds studied by Marx and Lenin should be rooted out and burnt before they have contaminated the mind of any other alien who should chance upon them. As an added precaution, I would adopt a system of permits, and rigorously bar all foreigners from the Reading Room. Englishmen, who fortunately can take an idea for granted without being moved by the fanaticism of practical evolutionaries, would still be allowed, subject to the necessary inquiries, to frequent the place. ISAAC MURPHY

The Claddagh, Galway.

THE STEINER METHOD

SIR,—Apropos of S.L.B.'s article on Dr. Steiner's investigation your readers may care to be reminded of the following lines from Tusser's "Five Hundred Points of Husbandry," 1562:

> Sowe peason and beans in the wane of the moone
> Who soweth them sooner, he soweth too soone:
> That they, with the planet, may rest and rise,
> And flourish with bearing, most plentiful wise.

51 Palace Street, S.W.1. ROBERT R. HYDE

Miscellany

ON THE TOP OF THE CADERAU

THE splinter and rattle of hail was continued
By the hettering beams of a morning that sinewed
The lowlands with silver: and trawled to the plains,
Rill-threaded, the sweep of its glittering seines.
As we rode to the summit (high over a cliff
It would dizzy the kestrel to plummet) the wind was a stiff
Bee-line to the sun, that it flew like a thundering kite,
Tunny-finned, and humming with gems, in the ocean of light;
And red on the blue-black, blinding azure, your coat,
Like a banner of fire in the storming of heaven afloat,
A flaunted bright challenge held out for the sunbeam to gore,
The cape of the dauntless (Aquilon, the toreador)
Flared under the blue-black buffeted rook of your hair,
And your face was a silvery cry in the solitude there,
As your reared your white horse on the summit, reminding me this—
That the steepest Nevadas of rapture hang over the deepest abyss.

ROY CAMPBELL

THEY MET AGAIN IN A TRAMCAR

IT was a warm April afternoon that I went by tramcar from town to visit a friend of mine living some distance away. The unusually warm day and the brilliant sunshine inside the car gave me an extremely drowsy feeling.

A gaily dressed young lady was sitting opposite to me. She was short and fat. The powder on her face was so thick that the perspiration formed into rivers as it ran down her face. One could see that most of the passengers did not care to look at her because of her proud glance. She fixed her dignified eyes on the pages of the book in her hand, but she could not read it, as the heat was so overpowering.

When I glanced round I could see no other interesting passenger, so I settled into a more comfortable position and tried to have a nap. The car suddenly stopped and the conductor shouted "River Road." When I opened my eyes I was just in time to catch a glimpse of the broad back of the gaily dressed lady as she was getting off the car. Then I noticed a rather plain girl came into the car.

There was no seat vacant and the girl stood just before me. She was not by any means pretty, and her age I judged to be about twenty. As I looked at her face I felt that somehow I knew her, but where we had met before I could not tell. When our eyes met she started and seemed surprised, too. But I could only turn my head and wonder: "who was she?"

The car suddenly moved faster and jerked so roughly that the girl almost lost her balance and fell over.

The identity of the girl before me flashed into my mind. It seemed that she was the fourth and youngest daughter of Mrs. R. Smith, a former landlady of mine. But she had greatly changed. Her face was fatter and her girlish charm had gone.

Having a further look at her I realised that there was nothing left of her former beauty and innocence.

"But nonsense!" I said to myself. "It could not be her, such a change is impossible. Nevertheless, this poor creature has a strange resemblance to the beautiful girl I once knew."

I had come to study here in London six years ago, when I was twenty. I had, at first, lived with a family named Smith, in which there were four daughters, all of them rather beautiful girls. The eldest was slightly older than myself. The second one was younger than myself and had a most violent temper. The youngest one was then sixteen. Among all the four girls I liked the youngest one best on account both of her beauty and charm. After I had stayed in their home for over one year I left because of my growing infatuation for the youngest daughter. After I had left about one year I began to feel that perhaps after all I had been a little callous.

Although I was not deeply attached to the three elder daughters I made love to all. I knew that in their hearts, however, the elder ones did not love me as much as the youngest. I well remembered the first occasion that she revealed her passion for me. We had gone out together one moonlight night to buy some fruit. As we passed through a very dark and quiet back narrow street I embraced and kissed her many times. But her non-resistance gave me the realisation of how dangerous it is to play with such an innocent young maiden like her.

Now she was standing right before me. When I looked up at her face she was in deep thought and had a hand-bag in her hand. As I looked at her the car moved quicker, and with a sudden jerk most of the passengers standing fell down. While the girl fell against me, she made an apology. When I heard her voice, I said: "Excuse me, are you not Lily?"

She seemed to recognise me too. Then she replied, "Oh! are you George?"

I stood up at once and offered her my seat with a smile, saying, "Yes, I am. You have changed so much, I scarcely recognised you."

At the same time we shook hands with each other, while she hastily remarked, "I would not have known you either, as you have become so terribly thin."

"I am not aware of it myself," said I.

She refused to take the seat which I offered her, saying that she would get off at the stop after the next. Then I stood up too with the intention of having a little further conversation with her.

"Are all the members of your family well?" I asked, noticing that her hands which had been once so soft and white were indeed roughened by hard work.

"Thank you, they are all well," she answered in an unnatural voice.

When another passenger occupied my seat I went with the girl to a quiet corner in the car. I wished to find out what had happened to all her sisters and herself, but I hardly knew how to begin the conversation. Judging from her spirit and circumstances, one could imagine that the family had not been prosperous after my departure. Those ambitious daughters must have brought ruin to the family.

"Have you finished your study now?" she asked me in a tone of anxiety. "I graduated this year," said I.

The car moved on more quickly and we relapsed into silence for a short while.

"Did you go to France?"

This question made me feel even more shame. As to going to France, that was only my excuse to get away from the family four years ago. Really I had no intention of going to France at all. I had suffered greatly from need of money during these six years while I was studying in London. How could I hope to get sufficient money to enable me to study in France? It was merely a dream that I was going to France.

Before I gave her any answer, she spoke again: "We all thought that you had gone to France. We have never for one moment thought you had been still here all the time. Why did you not come to see us during all these long years? After you left us, my sisters and I often talked about you. We thought many times of what an interesting time you would have in France."

"To go to France was my dream at that time. Dreams cannot always come to be true," said I.

"But we thought that you really had gone to France," she answered sadly.

The car stopped. Crowds of passengers were getting off and others coming in, so we were unable to continue our conversation for a short time.

"Have all your sisters married?" I asked her as the car started off again. I was anxious to know something more about her family and herself before she should get off at the next stop.

"To which one did you particularly refer? Did you mean my second sister?" she asked.

"No. No. I meant your eldest sister," I answered, feeling very uneasy.

She then said with great surprise, "About my eldest sister? Did you really not know?"

"What is it?" I asked. "I have not seen or heard anything about her since I left you all."

"She died shortly after you left," she said in a broken voice.

It came to my mind then that the eldest girl had been very sick when I left the family, but that it would prove fatal I had not the least suspicion. I used to talk and joke with her as she lay sick in bed.

As Lily would get off at the next stop, I wondered if I should get off too with her.

"I am getting off at this stop," she said as the car stopped. "Would you come with me to see my mother? I'm sure she would like to see you again."

"No. No. I will come to see her some other day," I protested, with a feeling of regret for not having accepted her request.

"Good-bye, then. I hope we may meet again some time, somewhere . . ." said she in a disappointed voice.

The car stopped. When she got off, a painful feeling overcame me. I said to myself: "I really cannot let her go like this."

"Well, good-bye, George," said she, standing outside the car. As soon as I heard her final farewell I jumped off the moving vehicle.

"Are you coming home with me?" she asked with delight.

"No, I will only accompany you halfway home," I replied. "There are many other questions I should like to ask you on the way."

We walked in silence for a long while. I could not tell what she was thinking. But when we walked across the park, my old memories rose to my mind. She and I used to meet here on dark nights on many occasions. The woods and grounds were just the same as they were five years ago. But she had changed. We were almost as strangers now. When we came into the path inside the woods, the girl seemed to be under a little emotion. As we walked along closely together, we noticed there were several noisy young people singing inside the woods. We had been walking very quickly. Then, she suddenly stopped for a rest and leaned her shoulder against a tree. But I sat down on the ground.

"It is very hot to-day," said I, trying to make her say something to break the oppressive silence.

"It has been," she replied calmly.

While I used my hat as a fan to cool my face, she kept her eyes averted in a strange expression.

"We have come here many times in the past," said I. "But as it was so long ago, you must have almost entirely forgotten."

"Oh no. Even now we often speak of you," she said quickly.

"Ah! do you? I suppose you are happily married?"

She did not reply for a while. Then she said, "My second sister with whom you used to walk in these woods has married that young engineer."

"Did she marry him?" said I. "But she told me that she would rather die than do so."

"Father and mother made her."

Once again we relapsed into silence. As we walked along I vividly recollected my life with the family. The eldest daughter was of delicate health and could not assist with any work in the house. The second one did fine embroidery; but she would do nothing to help the family. The third one was lazy and bad tempered. All the work was left to the youngest.

The family was poor. The youngest daughter had to do, besides all kinds of work in the home, odd jobs to gain a little extra money to help the family. I had often known her work until well after midnight. I had often talked to her while she worked during those long evenings, after all the other members of the family had gone to bed. It was then that we grew to love each other passionately.

Although she was such a beautiful and kind-hearted creature,

her mother did not like her. The reason of her mother's dislike was unknown to me. Nevertheless she was dear to me. Many times we vowed our eternal love for each other and promised to marry.

But later on I realised that our marriage was impossible. Then I decided to leave her and the family without any explanation save that I was going to France.

"Is your second sister happy now?" I asked again.

"You know she is an obedient girl. When she was first married to him she was very unhappy, but by and by she got used to him. Now she has a child of three years old."

"I am very glad to hear that," said I. "Is the child a boy or a girl?"

"A boy. And a very sweet child he is. . . ."

Just at this moment a crowd of people were passing.

"Shall we go into a café to have a cup of tea?" I ventured to ask.

"Oh, no. It is time for me to go home. Otherwise mother will be angry. It is different now, she is alone at home while I am away."

"Then we should have some tea quickly. It will not delay you long," I persisted.

My insistence finally won her consent, so we hurried away to a nearby café. We had tea quickly, without saying anything particular. As we left the café I bought some special cakes. When we approached her home, I said to her: "Now, I will not go any farther with you. I know that your mother likes this kind of cake, so please take my present to her and remember me to your sisters when you see them. If I have a chance I will come to see you soon again. But I am afraid . . ."

I did not finish my sentence, as I noticed the girl's eyes had become very strange. I said hurriedly:

"Good-bye then, I will see you again."

"Good-bye . . ." said she, as she slowly turned towards the direction of her house with tears on her cheeks.

I stood there in a dream looking at her while she was walking, slower and slower to her house.

K. C. CHANG

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Immaturity

The Young Huntress was probably written during Mr. Hugh Walpole's earliest schooldays. It bears all the signs of immaturity. There are reams of dialogue, most of it in the manner of the best-seller, but here and there remain patches of an earlier outpouring. The irate father with a horsewhip has now become a sister with a dog whip, and the wronged wife is childless in the last act. In the days of the stock companies travelling the country towns it would have wrung the heart of enthusiastic audiences. But then it would have been given the necessary full-blooded acting — broken voices, sagging spines, and a few bucketfuls of paper snow. The players at the Embassy, though at times verging on the melodramatic, suffer from the restraint put on present day acting. They do the best that can be done with the material given them, but the sooner their agony is ended the better for everyone.

The Film Society

The programme given to the Film Society on Sunday afternoon was the best I have seen for a very long time. The short films, for once, were all good, and not merely "amusing"—particularly the British Instructional film of a fungus growth whose spores change from vegetable to a coagulated "animal" matter, which in the magnified and quickened picture made entrancing patterns. The Mickey Mouse, too, was new and exceptionally funny. In the second half of the programme Paul Czinner's *Der Träumende Mund* was shown for the first time in England—it will appear soon in public, I hope, at the Academy, for it is an exceptionally intelligent film, directed and acted with a skill and restraint which have been rare since the talkies. It continues in essence the tradition of the early German silent films, though full use is made of dialogue, and of the musical performances during the film. Gaby, the wife of the first violinist of the Philharmonic Orchestra, falls in love with a famous violinist whose playing at a concert fascinates her. The husband and the violinist are old friends; the situation develops tragically but without over-emphasis, and in the end Gaby, unable to leave her husband who falls ill, or give up loving the other, writes a pathetic note and drowns herself. The drama is confined to these three characters, with the concert hall in the background, and its effectiveness depends on the character of Gaby, who is much younger than the two men. Elisabeth Bergner plays the part magnificently, with a vivid beauty in her management of the passionate, childlike, and overstrained moods of Gaby which I have never seen equalled in a film. She is a really fine actress. Czinner's direction of the film is remarkable all through, and particularly in the long sequence of the concert hall at the beginning and the dream at the end. I advise everyone who is sick of film musical comedies to see *Der Träumende Mund* when it comes on, because it is the product of genuine imagination and intelligence, and the music is by Beethoven and Mozart.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, January 27th—
- Capt. R. S. Rattray on "The African Child in Proverb, in Folk-lore and in Fact," Caxton Hall, Westminster, 5.30.
- London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Nicolai Malko, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
- "Mother of Pearl," Gaiety Theatre.

SATURDAY, January 28th—
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.

SUNDAY, January 29th—
- John A. Hobson on "Is World Government Possible?" Conway Hall, 11.
- Mrs. G. D. H. Cole on "Social Justice," Hampstead Ethical Society, 158A, Mill Lane, N.W., 6.15.
- Spanish Plays, Ambassadors Theatre.
- "What the Doctor Thought," Grafton Theatre.

MONDAY, January 30th—
- London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weingartner, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

TUESDAY, January 31st—
- Lord Allen of Hurtwood on "Do Pacifists Still Believe in Pacifism?" Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- Post-War Generation Meeting on Disarmament. Speeches by Miss Christine Fraser, Vyvyan Adams, M.P., Robert Bernays, M.P., and others, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, 8.
- John Grierson on "The Film and Everyday Life," Morley College, Westminster Bridge Road, 8.
- London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Adrian Boult, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
- "Doctor's Orders," Globe Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, February 1st—
- A. F. Tschiffely on "Ten Thousand Miles in the Saddle Through South America," 1, Cadogan Gdns., S.W, 5.30.
- B.B.C. Symphony Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
- "Head on Crash," Queen's Theatre.
- "The Witch," Little Theatre.

THURSDAY, February 2nd—
- "Richard of Bordeaux," New Theatre.

BP
PLUS
Plus what?
Plus a little something
some others haven't got

Current Literature

GEORGE MOORE

OUR English literature is far richer than the Russian, and this richness necessarily makes it more balanced, more sane, more healthily all-round. One century, even if it contain a Tolstoy, cannot begin to rival four. Yet this very inferiority makes the great Russian appear more important than the great English writer, and only time, that remorseless fire which burns away the undergrowth of little men, and leaves the great standing out visible as they were not in their lives, will show George Moore as more than the equal of Turgenev. Yet these two great artists were in many respects most singularly alike. They came from the same class, having the same background (serfs and the Mayo tenantry were much the same), and each, as an absentee, discovered his own nature in Paris and learned how to write from Frenchmen and then excelled his teachers. But the greatest likeness between them was that they were both pure artists and nothing else, for which reason they offended the common run of their compatriots. But though there was this general likeness in their circumstances, there was a great difference in the temperaments and natural endowments of the men. Turgenev was naturally wise and Moore was naturally foolish. But perhaps it was because he was not only "a bit of a genius but also a bit of a goose" that George Moore had such a deep sense of humour. He had, as it were, trained it on himself. And much of his lighter work, in which I reckon not only *Confessions of a Young Man* but also *Conversations In Ebury Street* and *Hail And Farewell*, depends for its charm on this capacity to see himself in humorous or even grotesque situations from the outside. I cannot pass over another aspect of his character which showed in the most attractive way that he was perhaps "a bit of a goose." I mean his generosity and his enthusiasm for the work of other men. Moore was famous for his scathing criticisms of his contemporaries, which were only saying straight out what he thought, but I have known him write a letter by nearly every post for a week to an inexperienced writer whose manuscript he was reading and which for the moment, at all events, he believed to be a work of art in danger of being spoiled. For a week or two Moore cared as passionately about this story as if it were his own, and his detailed critical advice, which went to the length of writing illustrative sentences into the manuscript, revealed his unending patience and his generosity.

Moore was indeed two men. Sometimes they were both present, but often the artist, who worked slowly, fitfully, and in secret, would drop several paces behind. Thus his second thoughts were always his best thoughts. Patience, humility, and a passion for perfection were what distinguished the *artist*. If his story were held up by a snag, he would never go round it, or shirk it like other men, but would sit down before it patiently, trying twenty different ways of removing the obstacle and going on stubbornly until at last he succeeded and the way was clear for the story to proceed. I saw much of him when he was writing *Ulick and Soracha* and *Aphrodite In Aulis*. They were the stories of his very old age, and at first they went badly. Often that second self, the artist, was far away in the background, and the old man looked with dismay at the tediousness of the tale he could not tell. The poverty and feebleness of old age were nakedly exposed by the merciless typewriter, and then suddenly, pen in hand, the artist descended fitfully upon the work, slashing out clumsy phrases, writing in the best things of all as though he had suddenly seen them, instead of his always having been groping for them. It was as though a diver who had been bringing up sand for a year should suddenly bring up handfuls of gold. Often a few deft changes would alter the whole quality of the first feeble draft. The same process was carried further in galley proof, and when at last the book was printed, I read and laughed with joy. Instead of drifting helplessly over a painted sea a wind had sprung up, the slack sails had filled, and there was all the life and music of the dancing boat.

His chief difference from Turgenev is not simply his humour, or that, in their worst moments, while the Russian sinks to insipidity, Moore becomes silly and affected, the chief difference, and it is characteristic of our older literature, is his range. The fifteen volumes of Turgenev are all stamped with the same attitude to life, and their scope only varies between the romantic Heine-like *Dream Tales* and the solid realism of *Virgin Soil*. But Moore had a larger literary background, and it was natural that when he had tired of French realism he should turn towards Landor and Pater. His work can indeed be divided into three sharply divided periods: that of youth, when he could not write at all and was capable of such things as *A Mere Accident*; that of his manhood, when he wrote a few bad books and many masterpieces; and that of his later years, in which he became increasingly sensitive to verbal beauty, less interested in states of mind, and more occupied by the eternal things in human life. Thus Moore's scope is immense. Because of that I could praise him for ever, not simply because he is my favourite author, but because there would always be something I had overlooked. Here I have not space to praise one of his stories as it deserves, but I shall name two which illustrate the greatest of his gifts: the gift of sympathy of which he had more than any man, at least than any artist who could put it into words. The first is the short story *Wilfred Holmes*, a man who composed music for the whistle pipe and wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper about the blackbird's song. I have chosen it because there is no story there, nothing but the portrait of a man, a pitiful creature who was not aware of being pitiful, whom Moore shows us with a sympathy and tenderness unsurpassed in the whole of literature. Yet Moore has kept his emotion impersonal, there is something almost chilly about it—a wintry beauty without a trace of sweaty assertion, of sentimental heat. He uses no force in telling us the story: he just tells us of this man who lived in lodgings, and it is the most moving thing in the world. The second I must name is *The Lake*, a book plunged in natural beauty which imprisons the reader, almost against his will, as it holds the priest captive until the day when he takes off his cassock and, leaving his clothes and his shoes upon the beach, he sets out to swim, out of his enchantment and his slavery, to freedom.

Four years ago, when we thought that Moore was dying, I went to see him in the nursing home. His head lay on the pillow, his hair pure white, and his complexion as delicate as the creased petal of a *gloire de Dijon* rose, and he looked at me with almost painfully innocent blue eyes. A man with eyes like that, I felt, must be taken advantage of by everybody. The paper boys had been shouting in Upper Regent Street, and I told him the news that the National had been won by Tipperary Tim, a hundred to one chance. "An Irish horse," he murmured, and began suddenly to tell me that to win at Aintree had been the one ambition of his life, and to describe the fences his father had made in Ireland, as big as at Aintree but with no rails at the top, and how he had ridden over them. I had never seen him so carried away or so happily excited. Usually, at Ebury Street, as we ate the cutlets, I led him on to speak of the book he was writing and he would pause and stumble over the story. Then suddenly in a flash the picture would come back and he would capture it. And then gracefully he would say: "But you must tell me what you are doing," and would recall a sentence of my work which had pleased him, for though he disliked reading, he had an extraordinary memory for anything that he *had* read. And afterwards I stood for a moment on the doorstep looking up into his innocent eyes while he waved a gentle benediction. "But don't leave me so long next time." That is over a year ago, and yesterday I saw that he was dead. I have read many obituaries but not one has said: "The greatest English prose-writer we have ever had is dead." That is the plain truth. We have had far, far greater poets and many of them, but not one of the prose writers has been his equal as an artist.

MERCURY PATTEN

DICTIONNAIRE DES IDEES REÇUES

The Cambridge History of English Literature. Edited by SIR A. W. WARD and A. R. WALLER. Fifteen volumes. 5s. each; £3 3s. the set. *Cambridge University Press.*

To review in detail a work of such diversity and specialisation as this is plainly impracticable. It seems to be necessary because in its present form and at its remarkably low price *The Cambridge History of English Literature* is certainly going to exert a standardising influence on the literary responses of the generation now growing up. Yet the responses it advocates are in many cases at variance with the intellectual trend of the last two decades. As far as its actual judgments are concerned, though the editors expressly disclaim finality for them, it would be reckless to assert that those it passes on any major writer are likely to be seriously challenged and reversed; it is the ideas behind the verdicts that now in many cases seem insubstantial. Evidently, no community of critical notions had been established among the contributors when the work was planned, and what common tone their judgments have results from the prevailing atmosphere of the time, and not from the application of definite principles. Literature is still the most powerful single formative influence, and when taught so that the emotional tendencies set up have to be scrapped or adjusted in face of adult experience, much suffering and waste of energy must result. So, though the *History* must for long remain invaluable as a handbook, many of its generalisations are chiefly useful as stimulants of re-adjustment. Unfortunately, such a work as the present can be made to serve only too well the more sinister ends of the examination system. But for the mature reader to go through these volumes and check over its critical remarks in the light of independent appreciation makes a uniquely fascinating pastime.

Creative or imaginative literature is always the smaller part of the material to be dealt with in a literary history. In these volumes the mental life of the nation, as it can be traced in memoirs, histories, letters, religious and political theories, in the developments of scholarship and in philosophy, is most adequately described. There is a great variety of essays on these and kindred subjects which are extraordinarily rich in information and appreciation. One could not single out two or three for admiration without being unjust to at least a score. But a mention must be made of the astounding innings played by Dr. Saintsbury from the first volume to the last—a feat that would be remarkable as virtuosity were not its principal characteristic the presence of his continuously vital sensibility. There is, too, an essay by Mr. Arthur Symons which shows this excellent but uneven critic at his best; it seems to be the only case in which a contributor has been chosen for his critical gifts and not primarily for his scholarship. It may be doubted, too, whether some of the space devoted to the biographical sketches might not have been more profitably employed. And in four important instances, at least (i.e., Marlowe, Donne, Wordsworth and Shelley), discoveries have lately been made which one must regret it was impossible to incorporate.

The volumes of the *History* were issued during the years 1907–16, so if we suppose the contributors to have been aged on an average forty their sensibilities and opinions would have been formed about twenty years earlier, that is, at a time when romantic taste held undisputed supremacy though the romantic creative impulse had by then spent itself. And in the subaltern critics gathered here one may recognise many of the symptoms of a romantic convention in its decline: a peculiar irresolute sensuality tending to dissipate itself in day-dreams and generally dignified with the name of idealism, a shrinking from the acceptance of the intellectual factor as vital to literature, a pouting disapprobation of satire, a lack of conviction as to the essentiality of form. Criticism is confined almost entirely to the descriptive method, the analytical being eschewed. It is true that Dr. Saintsbury contributes a series of chapters on the developments of prosody, but the most significant deficiency is of any co-ordinated exposition of the aesthetics of literature in general. In their anxiety that the *History* should unfold itself unfettered by any preconceived notions of artificial eras or controlling dates, the Editors have rather given the impression that the cycles of taste, or creative manner, have been as independent of mental influences as the succession of geological epochs.

Poetry is a very sensitive barometer of taste and it is here that a definite shift in contemporary interest may be observed. There is one essay, notably, which does not only look towards the past. This is Professor Grierson's chapter on Donne, from which, perhaps, may be dated not the appreciation, certainly, but the beginning of general recognition of that poet's greatness, which is the most remarkable single fact in post-war literary history.

The absence of this essay would have been an irreparable loss, and even as it is one must wish that it had been supplemented by a study like that which the same critic prefixed to his anthology of seventeenth-century metaphysical poets. Though all these poets are, of course, dealt with individually, with various degrees of adequacy, the opportunity to describe their unusually interesting inter-relationships is not accepted. Yet their achieving, through Donne, a kind of common genius without losing personal distinction is a unique event in English poetry.

Herrick is accorded relatively more importance than would now perhaps be allowed him, and Marvell, curiously, shares a chapter with Bunyan. Though Marvell is given the then current measure of praise, which was quite considerable, his critic, Mr. John Brown, is rather at a loss to substantiate the high opinion necessary to level the poet up to his yoke-fellow, the inspired tinker. So recourse is had to Nature and Wordsworth, that highly respectable couple the critics of the time joined in indissoluble matrimony, and we learn that "Marvell was an anticipator of Wordsworth in his sheer enjoyment of open air and country life for enjoyment's sake." In the same paragraph we are told that "at this time poets were not conspicuous for a love of nature herself" (a statement not hard to disprove unless there is some recondite meaning in that qualifying "herself"), and the remark is approvingly quoted that "Marvell throws himself into the very soul of the garden." Apart from its metaphysical ineptitude, such wording shows small appreciation of the fastidious rapture peculiar to the poet of "The Garden." These are a nice set of metaphysical assumptions, but such an ideology is not the aberration of a single puzzled writer. The notion of the poet as a slightly superior sort of hiker is persistent as a serious canon of criticism, and the conception of nature so brilliantly created by the romantics, and by Wordsworth in particular, is endowed with the prestige of an incontrovertible standard however vaguely applied.

The English have never had much sympathy with the search for principles of criticism. Even the calm of the Augustans was fretted and collapsed almost before it was achieved. But at least the exponents of pseudo-classical theory did know what they were looking for, and if a work did not conform to that, yet they were often eager to acknowledge its intrinsic merits. There is plenty of evidence to support the view that a wider catholicity of appreciation was possible under classical than under romantic prejudices. It is often the romantic critic who makes the more tyrannous demands for conformity. In an essay here on Pope, an uneasy recognition of his greatness is countered by the happy reflection that he did not write naturally. Of the "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady" the critic makes several impertinent complaints, among them, the fact that the lady cannot be clearly identified, but his gravest charge is that: "The feeling has been fondled for a literary purpose." Again, of "Eloisa to Abelard," he grumbles, "It may be doubted whether, in Pope's fervid tones, we are listening to the voice of nature and passion and not rather to a piece of superb declamation." What is peculiar here is the assumption that the voice of nature and passion is somehow preferable to a piece of superb declamation, that literary art is not quite nice. Even a don, one would think, should have recognised the voice of nature and passion on his college roof some moonlight night, and human passion, in the natural state, is not much more articulate than feline, nor a poet's than a stockbroker's. With such an aesthetic installed in a History which would have seemed to be the stronghold of traditional standards, it is only strange that the surrealists and such subversive extremists have met with any academic resistance, for the transcription of the content of the unconscious is only the logical conclusion of a naturalistic creed.

To pass over a few years, we find M. Legouis asserting, as a reason for appreciation, that the last of Wordsworth's Lucy poems "is one of the most desperate sobs that ever escaped from the heart of a forlorn lover." Though Musset is, no doubt, responsible for this critical lapse, it is only fair to remember that his equating of a sob with poetical excellence was perpetrated in verse. It may still be read on the base of his statue by the Comédie Française, if indignant neo-classicists have not yet obliterated it.

The most general defect of the chapters on the novelists is in the amount of space devoted to the biography of the author and to retailing the plots of his novels to the exclusion of the attempt

to characterise his achievement aesthetically. The most notable exceptions are the essay on Dickens by Saintsbury, and the one on Meredith by W. T. Young. But too frequently we find the same confusion between the reality of fiction and the emotions of real life, a confusion which is in one case even extended to the author, when we are told, evidently with the intention of reflecting the merit on to the novels: "of Thackeray's personal preference for virtue there can be no question." And to the same essay we owe the following solecism: "The debauched and hysterical Sir Francis is too contemptible to be interesting." Here the blame, which should, of course, be attached to the author for his failure of creative power, is shouldered on to his unfortunate puppet in the interests of morality. A remark by Dr. Saintsbury would have saved a lot of this judging of characters in fiction as if they were real. He says: "The company of Mrs. Gamp never ceases to be as delightful in fiction . . . as it would be disgusting in real life."

Another prevalent confusion is the erection of a false antithesis between nature and society. It was a characteristic of the age of Pope, we are told, that "the social interest in man had dwarfed the feeling for nature." We have had a long experience of what happens to literature when a so-called feeling for nature dwarfs the social interest in man. But that phase is over and the exponents of a new approach to literature are already willingly listened to. It is part of the fascination of a history like this one, that whilst the fabric remains much the same, the reader can embroider it in patterns that reflect the peculiar colour-value of his own moment in space and time.

EDGELL RICKWORD

THE SINFULNESS OF DAY-DREAMING

The Bulpington of Blup. By H. G. WELLS. London: *Hutchinson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Wells, in this latest novel, has taken the cowardly child of two intellectuals and "savaged" him so deliberately that, at the end, most of the qualities which make up a human being have gone, and we are left with a mean, gibbering thing which postures before two maiden ladies in a Devonshire village.

It would not be Mr. Wells if the tale was not told with amazing vivacity, and with those remarkable flashes of contemporary insight which make him one of the supreme journalists of our time. It would not be Mr. Wells, either, if there was not that power to seize a mood, to delineate an attitude, which has given him an ability to hold the attention of readers for over forty years. But this is the first time I have read a book by him (and I think I have read all his books even down to his text-book of biology) in which I am left in some bewilderment as to what Mr. Wells wanted to say.

If his meaning is that the child of self-absorbed, egoistic, flatulent parents will not be brought up to face life, especially if he has not had a scientific education; that he will take refuge in a private and crude Utopia of which the danger is that it will come to vanquish reality; and that the dream-life will make him a selfish, strutting, cowardly fool; then I think there is much to be said for the argument, though I suspect that the loss of his income would have done much to cure Theodore. If we are to find the meaning in the contrast between Theodore's weakness and the stark clarity of Teddy's mind (I suspect Teddy, a biologist and the son of a biologist, of being a brilliantly sympathetic portrait of a distinguished academic figure in London), then I would only urge that the antithesis Mr. Wells makes between "values" which merely confuse and betray, and "facts" which clarify and cleanse, seems to me wholly unjustifiable. Any society, whether dominated by a weak romantic, or a cold, passionless man of science, must know where it wants to go if it is to plan its life successfully; and Mr. Wells, of all people, surely does not want to teach us that we can really make a plan without some scheme of values to support it. And if the book means neither of these things, then I am not very sure what it does mean.

Yet no one ought to omit to read it, because it contains some unforgettable things done as only Mr. Wells can do them. His portrait of the muddled, complacent, pre-war society seems to me a masterly prophecy of what the historian of 2014 will say of that blind epoch. His account of Theodore's father, the man of letters who has subsided into the lesser criticism, is a brilliant sketch of the type known to us all who, not having the energy of soul to create, toys insolently with the pleasure of destroying. His Mr. Wimperdick, the Roman Catholic propagandist, who knows the "patter" of science and metaphysics without any real acquaintance with either, might have stepped right out of the pages of some of the leading quarterlies. The reaction of society to the war, the variety of ways in which we made ourselves the victim of those obsessions which we erected into universal laws, the horror of the trenches which yet went with a sadistic pleasure in self-abnegation, Mr. Wells has never portrayed these things better. Some of his characters, for me, at least, never quite come alive; Margaret, for instance, whom I suspect to be very wholly alive in Mr. Wells's mind, and Rachel; they seem to me themes for discussion rather than persons encountered. Yet the whole is marvellously alive, with all of Mr. Wells's devastating power, as in his furious attack on Mr. T. S. Eliot, to see the ultimate weakness of an attitude in terms of the alliances it necessarily effects for itself. All of this, with its concrete vividness of imagery, its living sense of being right inside the belly of the universe, has all Mr. Wells's old magic.

But my own conviction is emphatic that Mr. Wells has to be half in love at least with his hero to be at his best. Kipps, Mr. Polly, Remington, Ponderevo, these Mr. Wells added to the English literary tradition because intimate affection made him radiant with imaginative insight. Here he hates; and, because he hates, he has lost that power of compassionate understanding which is one of the most significant parts of him. Of course, he is right in insisting that if a man will not face life he will betray it, and that this is the ultimate sin. Of course, also, he is right in getting angry because a man is fool enough and weak enough to make the world in his own image. But was that really Theodore's fault, or his parents' fault? And, if the latter, as I think Mr. Wells shows clearly, is not their responsibility also a partial one? At that point, surely, we go back to an infinite regression; and, once we do, I suspect that all Mr. Wells's indignation against his hapless victim is misplaced. For when he delivers the verdict and inflicts his terrible judgment he is indicting the whole universe. But I think Carlyle was right when he told Margaret Fuller that she had better accept the world.

HAROLD J. LASKI

GENERAL GORDON

Gordon: An Intimate Portrait. By H. E. WORTHAM *Harrap.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Gordon: The Sudan and Slavery. By PIERRE CRABITÈS. *Routledge.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

It is exactly one hundred years ago that Charles George Gordon was born at 1, Kemp Terrace, Woolwich Common—on January 28th, 1833, and centenaries are now the recognised opportunities for biographers and publishers, for "final" appreciations, condemnations, eulogies or vindications. Hence these two books, which follow closely upon and owe much to Dr. Bernard Allen's *Gordon and the Sudan.* It would be difficult to find a better subject for centenarial biography than General Gordon. The human heart, to say nothing of the human brain, is psychologically so full of complications and contradictions, men's actions are often such false witnesses to their motives and intentions, and finally the noble Muse, History, upon investigation turns out to be such a lying minx that no one, at the bottom of his own shifty heart, can really be certain that he holds the truth about the life and character of even the simplest "historical" personage who was born or died one hundred years ago. But "simple" is the last adjective which could possibly be applied to Charles Gordon. His character was kaleidoscopically complicated; his heart and brain were always seething with contradictory passions and ideas; his behaviour, even for an Englishman, was eccentric; his view of the world and the universe, both in his meditations and conversation, fantastic. In the final act of his life, which began with his interview with Stead on January 8th, 1884, and ended in Khartoum in the early morning of January 26th, 1885, he became the centre of an extraordinarily difficult and complicated political situation which at the time roused the most violent patriotic passions and party prejudices, and which few people, even to-day, can examine with the dispassionate calm of the ideal historian.

Gordon is therefore a tempting victim for the centenary biographer. The tragedy of the religious eccentric in the uniform of a major-general can be retold à la Lytton Strachey: or the hero of our Victorian fathers can be "vindicated"; or the bold bio-

grapher may make a new attempt to reconstruct the real Gordon and in the final act fit together the jig-saw puzzle to which Gordon, Gladstone, Cromer, Lord Hartington, Lord Wolseley, and the Mahdi all contrived to contribute obscurity. Of the two biographers under review, Mr. Crabitès has adopted the second method. His publishers tell us that this is "a final vindication of one of the greatest Englishmen of the nineteenth or any other century," but after reading the book I do not think that it is a vindication and I am quite sure that it is not final. Mr. Crabitès has made a fundamental mistake as a biographer; he has tried to prove too much in his hero's favour. It is quite possible, as others have shown, to "vindicate" Gordon without adopting the fantastic thesis which destroys the value of this book as a serious contribution to the problem. Mr. Crabitès is obsessed by the fact that many of Gordon's critics (and many of his friends) accused him of vacillation and instability, and he sets out to prove the impossible, namely, that Gordon never vacillated and was never unstable, that he was an idealist who always kept his ideals controlled by his realism, and that in the Sudan, no less than in China and at Gravesend, his actions and policy were distinguished by their amazing realism and consistency. The result is absurd and absolutely unnecessary for Gordon's "vindication." Gordon's character, as his own letters and journals show, and every one who came in contact with him felt, was much more complicated than Mr. Crabitès or his "critics" assume. On one side of him he was a man of indomitable will and fanatical consistency, the kind of realist who builds or destroys an empire, wins battles, imposes his will upon other people, and crucifies himself upon a delusion. This was the side of him which made him a first-rate soldier where tactics were of supreme importance and the conditions of warfare primitive. It made him a magnificent leader of men, provided that the men were not Europeans. It enabled him to perform considerable feats of arms with a mere rabble of Chinese soldiery and incredible feats of endurance in the Sudan. On this side of him he was a hard-headed man of action, with a quick eye and clear brain and an energy almost, but not quite, demonic.

But there was another side to General Gordon which was entirely contradictory. He was a visionary, and one of those visionaries who act on impulse. There was practically nothing which he was not capable, at moments, of believing without evidence. He had a fertile and feverish imagination, and any idea which occurred to him with sufficient suddenness he was inclined to adopt temporarily as an inspiration. It was this side of his character which made him bombard Cromer with twenty telegrams a day from Khartoum, propose at one moment to deport Zobeir to Cyprus and at the next to take him with him to Khartoum because he had had "a mystic feeling" that he could trust him, go off to Mauritius as Officer Commanding the Royal Engineers because Sir Howard Elphinstone didn't want to go, and accept the post of Private Secretary to Lord Ripon only to resign it after three weeks. Mr. Crabitès has to perform impossible feats in order to translate this impulsive inconsistency of Gordon's into consistent realism, and in performing them he fails to make his explanations or his view of his hero's character credible.

Mr. Wortham's book is much better. It is a solid piece of work, giving one the facts and an intelligent, reasonably impartial appreciation of them and of Gordon. The result is an interesting biography. The reader will find some of the high lights in Lytton Strachey's portrait become a little less brilliant, and some of the darkest shadows a shade brighter. The question of Gordon's intemperance or sobriety loses some of the importance that it has recently been given by hectic partisans. And where, in important cases, Mr. Wortham does not feel that the evidence is sufficient to warrant a definite judgment, he states the facts and the different interpretations which may be given to them, leaving it to the reader to make or not to make a decision. He does this when he comes to what is much the most interesting and important problem connected with Gordon's life, namely, the circumstances which brought it to an end. I do not myself believe that we have sufficient evidence to make it possible for us to answer with certainty the crucial question, why the Cabinet of Mr. Gladstone sent to Khartoum to carry out the policy of evacuation the notoriously self-willed and eccentric soldier who had just publicly declared himself in favour of the opposite policy. Mr. Wortham gives with clearness and impartiality the three alternative explanations which have found adherents, but he does not himself adopt any of them. In this he is wise, as any one will discover who compares his account of Gordon's end with that of Mr. Crabitès'.

LEONARD WOOLF

THE LAST OF THE BARDS

The Collected Poems of Herbert Palmer. *Benn.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Herbert Palmer stands alone in our modern sophisticated and bored world as a poet who (to quote his own words) writes from "an exuberance of pure intuition." He has no self-consciousness, and none of the intellectual snobbery which prevents so many of his contemporaries from expressing definite faiths or ideas. He has none of their cautious poetic birth-control, and whenever his mind goes in unto his soul, the result is always fruitful. The result is a huge family, a catholic family, who play and squabble together in this volume, making a fine riot of noise, and many unconscious cries and gestures of astonishing beauty. They are lean and hungry children; some are crippled from birth; their manners are appalling, and they have not a literary handkerchief between them. But in every one of them you can see the paternity; the flashing eye, the fierce carriage, the passionate innocence. If you are a literary lady or gent, a connoisseur of "Attic shapes," a collector of esoteric aesthetics, I advise you to keep away from this God-haunted slum. It will put your teeth on edge, and give you a headache.

To begin with, Mr. Palmer is always in a paroxysm of extremes. If he is not beating his breast and casting ashes on his head, he is vaunting himself as the harp of the Lord. The resemblance to the prophets of the Old Testament is obvious; and what is more naive and old-fashioned nowadays than a claim to direct divine confidence or punishment? What would the psychologists say? Even more than they have already said about William Blake! Throughout this volume the image of the harp recurs (rather like Blake's "caterpillar on the leaf"), and one realises how significant it is of this poet who so obviously has the fire of genius and not one ounce of restraining talent to prevent his muse from making a fool of itself. The slightest stimulus sets it working, and it bobs up with exasperating freshness.

> For when I eat gooseberry pudding and tart
> Zig-zag goes my brain, and away whirls my heart.

Like the bards who used to sell their penny rhymes in the streets, Mr. Palmer improvises on every public occasion, and sometimes the result is the same sort of naive doggerel as that which filled the broad-sheets.

But then at other times it isn't! There is a long poem here, written on the occasion of the marriage of Princess Mary. It appeared at the time in this journal. It is a magnificent dithyrambic, beginning with "a boycott in Fleet Street of Passion and Song," discussing the poet's poverty and his unsold books, identifying him with the galaxy of English poets from Cynewulf to Middleton, and proclaiming his prophetic mission:

> See on any proud head a coronal of thorns;
> Man may not sorrow or sin, but I know;
> I am stabbed by a million sharp down-pressing horns,
> I totter and fall, and my strength is laid low.
>
> And I raise me and brood; then I thunder and sing.
> Man's soul in my hands is a rosebud of fire.
> I touch Vision, bright Mystery, Ecstasy's wing.
> I see God; I am rapt; I cleanse all by my lyre.

"Ridiculous, isn't it?" as the Maharajah said in the *Green Goddess*. And a few superior minds may turn away from these vague generalisations and never realise that coming from this poet the vision, the mystery, the ecstasy (whatever they may *mean*) are authentic, and recognisable as a force that sustains his life, and is the motive power of every one of us and of the world we inhabit. Finally, the poem gathers up the stars and offers them as jewellery to the Princess. She lives for him, a gracious and regal being, a Gloriana far more authentic than the rather bespangled royal virgin whom Spenser invoked.

If Mr. Palmer has a centralising philosophy, it may be discovered in his unmeditated faith in a paternal and severely benevolent spirit controlling the universe. Child of this spirit, he recognises all men as members with himself of one family. He is therefore at liberty to quarrel with them as noisily as he pleases, to revile them when they hurt him, to demand their forgiveness and charity, and to respond without reservation to their love and understanding. This bickersome brother, exacting and a confounded nuisance, will fight to the last to maintain that family integrity, and defy the horrors of the outer silence which threatens to overwhelm it by the derision of nothingness. Even that nothingness takes on a personality for him; and in thus giving an image to the final and impalpable fear, Mr. Palmer

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shows himself a pure poet; for in the final test the poet is the maker of images:

Put on, frail ghosts, more tangible gown;
Compass me round and comfort me.
My soul is utterly cast down,
For I have killed my enemy.

I would that he were whole again.
Wounds would I take without a moan,
For as I flung him to the slain
I knew his spirit for my own.

RICHARD CHURCH

HUME

David Hume. By B. M. LAING. Leaders of Philosophy Series. *Benn.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Neither as man nor as philosopher is David Hume likely to cease to command the interest of thinking people; for he is always provocative of controversy. His character is enigmatical; even before Adam Smith pronounced his challenging verdict that it approached as near to perfection as the nature of human frailty would allow, and ever since, men have disputed about it. His ideas, or perhaps rather his expression of them, are even more doubtful; and both the degree of his originality and the precise influence he has exerted on his successors are matters on which it is possible to dispute.

This interest shows no sign of diminution. Hume, being dead, yet speaketh, and is listened to in our day as eagerly as ever. Mr. Greig's recent edition of the Letters, followed by his very able Life, not to speak of Professor A. E. Taylor's discussion of the famous *Essay on Miracles*, shows clearly the power Hume still exerts; and now we have Dr. Laing's study of the philosophy, which is at once due to this perennial interest and likely to stimulate it.

Dr. Laing's position will probably be regarded in many quarters as a paradox. It is much as if a biographer of Lord Balfour were to maintain that his hero was really a misunderstood pillar of Radicalism, and a Home Ruler in disguise. For Dr. Laing holds, if we understand him rightly, that Hume's arguments on causation, the nature of knowledge, and the like, were really meant as confutations of scepticism, and that Reid, Hamilton, Kant, and the other thinkers who studied him and endeavoured either to overthrow or to modify his theories, were entirely mistaken as to their tendency. Similarly, those qualifying sentences and saving clauses in the essays on religion, by which Hume tried to defend himself against militant orthodoxy, and which have usually been regarded as ironical, Dr. Laing takes as seriously meant. Hume, he rightly says, was no atheist; and his friendship with Robertson, Jardine, Jupiter Carlyle, and the other moderates in the Scottish Church proves, Dr. Laing thinks, that though hardly orthodox he could yet find a niche in Liberal Christian circles. We confess that we find it hard to accept all this. That, for example, the conclusion of the *Essay on Miracles* can be thus interpreted seems to us incredible: "Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of the veracity (of the Christian religion). And whoever is moved by *Faith* to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience." We know how Newman took that sentence—to the destruction of the faith of some of his disciples. But that Dr. Laing should thus take it is surprising.

To disagree with Dr. Laing, however, is not to despise his book. His work is very able, and the very fact that he presents an unusual point of view is in its favour: he compels us to reconsider our opinions at every turn. He is not out to startle; his arguments are always impressive, and he provides us with the chance of answering them. The learning is great, and the studies of those, like Sextus Empiricus, who in some respects anticipated Hume, are very illuminating. Not least suggestive are the summaries of Hume's essays on political and social questions—money, Free Trade, commerce, taxes, population—always keen, thoughtful, and suggestive. We close the book with the sense that Hume was a very great man, and Dr. Laing a very good commentator.

SPANISH FIREWORKS

Tiger Juan. By RAMON PEREZ DE AYALA. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

There is an intense energy, a hammer on anvil hum in the Castillian language which tend to vanish the moment it is translated into cool English. The result is that a book which has excited one in the original looks tame and flat in translation. and we are forced to admit that it is useless to translate a book unless one can carry over some rendering of the overtone of a people's life. This is doubly necessary with Spanish writers, for each writes not only out of Spain but out of a region of Spain. His book will have an almost exotic ring even in Madrid. It frequently occurs that from the point of view of a foreign reader with his standardised European culture the Spanish regionalism is a mere picturesque curiosity. How odd these provincials are, how tedious and how prettily homespun! How charming they look outside the cosmopolitan current! A great deal of modern Spanish literature has this effect upon us; and yet at the same time we are conscious of a vitality, a sanity, a spiritual vigour which become rarer in our own literature. Perhaps it is because we have not understood, that we have selected Blasco Ibañez as the representative modern Spanish novelist?

To Ramon Perez de Ayala, the most important of his contemporaries, the misgiving can hardly apply. He is at once deeply, regionally Spanish and European. He can both clatter the clogs of his Asturian town and make us look to our Gides and Joyces. For *Tiger Juan*, quite apart from its picturesque native character, is a novel of experiment and ideas, as original in its fashion as *Mrs. Dalloway* or *Point Counterpoint* and free from the sourness, aridity and glitter of disintegration which have accompanied modern experiment. *Tiger Juan* is "modern" without ennui or pretentiousness, and it is of immense interest to those who have wondered if there are any further possibilities in the poetic development of the novel.

The literal outline of a story which is treated with intense visual vividness, poetically, fantastically, realistically and bound together by the invisible threads of symbolism, will seem meagre. Professor Starkie who, on the whole, has managed the translation fairly well—excepting some jarring lapses into the Irish vernacular—suggests in an introduction that we must take Tiger Juan as the typical rugged Spaniard emerging from the seventeenth century, working the Calderonian notions of "the point of

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honour" out of his system, and becoming a citizen of the modern world. The significance of Tiger Juan is undoubtedly both real and—a favourite Spanish word—transcendental. Literally he is a quack, a small town medicine man, public letter writer, amateur actor and chestnut vendor, who sets up his stall in the market square of Pilares and explodes with rage at his romantic adopted son and at the populace in general. It is supposed that he has murdered his wife caught in adultery; the truth is that he nearly murdered her. His perpetual tune, for he rages at length, is hatred of women and exaltation of honour. Later Tiger Juan finds himself in love with a young woman who has aroused a hopeless passion in his beloved adopted son; through the graceful influence of a well-disposed widow, he marries the girl. She, numbed with terror and a familiar of original sin, goes off with a commercial traveller who is a reincarnation of Don Juan. On the night of St. John's Eve, a night of primitive Celtic magic, there is reconciliation. The agony and purification of Tiger Juan are complete.

The distinctiveness of the technique of Señor Ayala's story lies in its musical complexity, its balancing of the overtones and undertones of the central theme, and in the blending of poetry and picaresque realism. But, contrary to the fashion of German fantasias, for example, this book has its feet solidly on the earth. The idyllic and the grotesque, the saintly and the sardonic, the passionate and the critical are harmonised by a novelist of brains, who delights in fireworks, casuistry and dialectic. There is fine variety of character and landscape. Here is death scene:

> . . . There were about twenty camp beds with crosses painted on the wall, in black, at the head, and presiding over all the others there was an iron bedstead covered with a white and coloured quilt in which lay Señor Gamborena. The inmates of the College were kneeling around the bed. Farthest away were the deaf mutes sobbing in inarticulate fashion, like dogs baying at the moon; nearer to the bed were the blind boys whose only powers of perception lay in the ends of their fingers. They all stretched their arms trying to touch the body of their adopted father, who was like the skeleton of a little bird, and hardly showed any bulk beneath the coverlet of the bed. On each side of the pillows stood three people: a handsome young priest smartly dressed, carrying a coat of sleek Merino wool under his arm as though it were a bull-fighter's cape; a shabbily dressed little man with a face the colour and consistency of raw macaroni, who was a medical student from the hospital; and finally the Member of Parliament for the province who was gazing at his patent leather boots with a bored expression on his face.

The book has its tedium. Spanish garrulity and versatility take their toll. The movement is backward and forward like sound and echo, rather than clearly forward, as in all Señor Ayala's novels. We might complain that every flicker of an eyelid was staged and that Tiger Juan's rages grow so phenomenal as to appear artificial. Yet the novelist's malice, humour and wit atone for these faults and we are left at the end with a sense of freshness and sweetness as after an astonishing electric storm.

SHORTER NOTICE

The People's Year Book, 1933 (Sixteenth Annual of the English and Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Societies). *C.W.S.* 3s.

This hardy annual keeps up its high standard. It gives us, as usual, an account of the progress of the movement at home, and, more briefly, in many other countries, and the statistics of membership and finance, down to the end of 1931, show how successfully the co-operators have weathered the world blizzard. The membership of the retail distributive societies in Great Britain more than doubled since 1913, and stood last year at over 6½ millions. Share and loan capital was £142½ millions; sales amounted to nearly £208 millions; co-operative employees numbered 187,000, with a wages and salaries bill of £24¾ millions. Besides the facts and figures relating to co-operation, there are the usual articles of general interest on social, economic and cultural questions. The book is excellently printed and illustrated, and is invaluable as a reference book for journalists, speakers and all whom it may concern.

ENGLAND *v.* WALES

BRUTAL game this, even though the issues are ultimately decided rather by the moods of the spirit than by sheer beef and brawn. Life is lonely, and the earth is full of places which are lonelier than the average. But the loneliest place of all is the patch of turf occupied by a novice playing fullback for his country before 60,000 spectators; and its loneliness may swell to positive agony when the ball is slowly, slowly, slowly dropping down from the heavens towards his trembling arms, and a pack of 15st. hearties are tearing down upon him. England knew that Jenkins had never played fullback in a big match, and that Wooller was a mere nineteen-year-old schoolboy. So in the first two minutes at Twickenham last Saturday they tried to shatter each man by kicking the ball high to him in the open, instead of finding a safe touch as normal tactics dictate. Jenkins met the challenge boldly, caught the ball clean, and returned it with a far heftier kick. Wooller faltered, but recovered himself, dodged the leading hearty, and got the ball into touch somehow. England grinned with discomfiture, and ever afterwards kicked for touch if possible. Wales was expected to lose, and shaped like a beaten team. England behaved as if they were a college fifteen playing a weakish school. "We must not humiliate these people by scoring too soon or too often." So when chances came their way they were treated in a genial and not too earnest spirit. The Welshmen could make no real progress; any dark, lithe little man who tried to wriggle through was seized in a bearlike hug, and grassed with a thump. After half an hour England scored rather a dubious try, which was not converted; with a shade more steadiness and thoughtfulness she might have scored five. It was noticeable that the English scrummage was musclebound. It could not dribble, nor rush, nor pass. It could not even heel, for when it got the ball safely hooked, the ball stuck in the second or even in the third row. Key had to wait for it, and when at last it emerged, he usually had the Welsh scrum half and Isaac, their wing forward, clawing at his body or kicking near his hands. His passes necessarily suffered. Elliott, the English stand-off half, naturally hoped for long passes flung a yard or so in front of him, which he might catch on the run, jinking past his immediate enemy. It was all Key could do to get the ball away at all. By contrast, the Welsh forwards were just as clumsy in many of the scrummages. But every now and then they contrived to heel in such lightning fashion that no Englishman had time to get within yards of Turnbull, and the Welsh threes were on the move before their tacklers could even get on their toes properly. Had there been any real genius in the Welsh line, this economy of seconds and element of

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surprise must have produced scores; but there was no such genius, and the English line were grim tacklers. Half time arrived with no real hint of the probable run of the game. The score ought to have been 16—3 in England's favour; that it was only 3—0 is the measure of their great clumsiness.

During the five minutes respite the Englishmen loafed in cliques, whereas the Welsh team clustered in a compact knot, and listened to instruction. The whistle blew, and the Welshmen scampered down untidily on the English line like a pack of yelping terriers. The defence was rattled, and could not get the ball away, though the Welsh could not force a way through. There was much clumsy bickering in the left-hand corner, close on the English goal line. The players were all bunched there, so that Boon, the Welsh right wing threequarter, was standing solitary and idle right in front of the English goal. Suddenly from behind the heaving screen of sweaty men the ball flew straight into Boon's surprised arms. No man was near him, or could get near him. He took his time and coolly dropped a soft goal, rather than try his speed against a marker who had already downed him heavily several times. 4—3 for Wales!

This was climacteric. When a Welsh team is leading it plays as if it had thirty men instead of fifteen. And Wales was now leading on the sacred soil of Twickenham, where Wales had never yet won. England was rattled, and Wales was berserk. Terrific self-restraint alone prevented the red jerseys from whooping some weird, unintelligible warcry as they bore down on the English line and stayed there. The English tactics were obvious enough. There was no need for the moment to perform miracles. This kind of inspiration is a species of hysteria. If thwarted, it evaporates. Cool, steady defence for ten minutes would have seen it die down into a disappointment akin to despair. But England was neither cool nor steady. The backs developed butterfingers. The hearties in the scrum became clumsier than ever. Kicks were topped and sliced and muffed. Nothing went right. If there had been any genuine football genius in the Welsh team, England would have been pulverised. But more by luck and brawn than by skill or steadiness they stalled off the excited Welshmen, and the offensive began to die down. England at last contrived to get the ball away towards the half-distance; and then disaster fell. This curious game includes a tactic known as the "hand-off." Ideally, this hand-off takes the form of a push with the palm of the hand against an opponent's chest or even chin. But in the ferocities of international warfare it may occasionally rise to the heights of a straight left with the clenched fist; and since accurate aiming is hardly possible in the heat of such contests, the straight left may land on an opponent's nose or eye. In this case Gerrard's eye was the landing ground, and he tottered off. The scrum now consisted of seven English hearties (very clumsy and somewhat rattled) against eight Welsh hearties (not quite so clumsy and licking victorious lips). Poor Key's hopes of getting a ball which he could use to real purpose were destroyed for ever. The Welshmen went down to the English line and stayed there; but demonstrated their lack of football genius by an entire inability to construct a single threatening movement. At last England broke away, and a series of lucky bumps and bounces put Elliott out by himself with the ball in his arms. He was too slow to reach the Welsh line before the schoolboy Wooller leapt on his back from behind. This was England's last spasm, and towards the end atrocious marking by the English left wing gave Boon a simple run in to the very back of the posts. It is fortunate that no Dominion fifteen is visiting our islands this year; it would take ship home again unbeaten, without ever having been seriously frightened.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

No. 5.—LEGATEES

Sir Rice Pudden sails on the *s.s. Hysteria* to inspect his new ranch in Canada. He has with him his butler, John Driver; his carter, Tom Butler; his carpenter, Harry Carter; and his driver, Alfred Carpenter. They have all been in his service for some years.

The *Hysteria* founders, leaving no survivors. Sir Rice Pudden's will is produced by his agent. It is printed in block capitals and runs as follows:

ONE SIXTH OF ALL I LEAVE GOES TO CARPENTER (OR HIS HEIRS) IF CARPENTER IS STILL IN MY SERVICE WHEN I DIE. OTHERWISE TO CATS' HOME. ONE THIRD OF ALL I LEAVE GOES TO CARTER (OR HIS HEIRS) IF CARTER IS STILL IN MY SERVICE WHEN I DIE. OTHERWISE TO BUTLER (OR HIS HEIRS). ONE HALF OF ALL I LEAVE GOES TO DRIVER (OR HIS HEIRS) IF DRIVER IS STILL IN MY SERVICE WHEN I DIE. OTHERWISE TO BE DIVIDED EQUALLY BETWEEN CARPENTER (OR HIS HEIRS) BUTLER (OR HIS HEIRS) AND CATS' HOME.

The construction of the will is sought in the High Court, on the application of the various parties interested.

The Court decides:

(1) That there is no means of knowing in what order the passengers on the *Hysteria* met their death; but that it must be presumed that no two of them died simultaneously.

(2) That there is no means of knowing whether the various legatees (other than the Cats' Home) are referred to by their names or by their vocations.

(3) That, subject to the above rules of construction, all relevant sets of assumptions must be regarded as equally probable; and that the money must be divided accordingly.

After payment of death duties and counsels' fees there is £12,000 to divide. *How is it divided?*

PROBLEM 3.—THE STENTORIAN LEAGUE

Six goals were scored in the match between the Lions and Tigers.

The smallest possible number of goals is 71, which will give the following results for the 15 matches played:

1—0	2—0	2—1	3—0	3—1	4—0
3—2	4—1	5—0	4—2	5—1	6—0
4—3	5—2	6—1			

Hence the "League Table" must be as follows:

Teams	A	B	C	D	E	F
A	—	5—2	6—1 or 5—1	5—1 or 6—1	6—0 or 5—0	5—0 or 6—0
B	2—5	—	4—3	4—2	4—1	4—0
C	1—6 or 1—5	3—4	—	3—2	3—1	3—0
D	1—5 or 1—6	2—4	2—3	—	2—1	2—0
E	0—6 or 0—5	1—4	1—3	1—2	—	1—0
F	0—5 or 0—6	0—4	0—3	0—2	0—1	—

Team E must be the Rabbits; team F the Wolves; team C the Mules; team A the Goats.

There is no means of telling whether team B is the Lions and Team D the Tigers, or *vice versa;* but clearly this does not matter. The score in their match is 4—2.

PROBLEM 2.—ALICE'S PARTY

The order at the table (clockwise) is: Alice, Rosemary, Isobel, Betty, Pat, Evelyn, Ruth, Joan, Mabel, Pamela.

The total ages of the girls is clearly 90 (2×45). From this, and the remaining data, can be deduced a series of linear equations. To complete the solution, recourse must be had to trial and error.

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In addition, a record is kept of the names of senders of all correct solutions submitted. All solvers qualify for book prizes on a cumulative-point basis. For particulars see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of December 24th.

Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this office not later than the next Tuesday but one after the date of publication.

THE PLAYTIME DINNER

About 40 attended the dinner on Jan. 12th, under Mr. Martin's very efficient chairmanship. Many who had intended to be present were at the last moment unable to get away; that so large a party assembled, under these circumstances, reflects great credit on the organisers. I should like, on behalf of those present, to put on record our best thanks to the Committee; in particular to Mr. S. T. Shovelton, an ideal Hon. Secretary, and to Wing-Commander Struan Marshall, who organised our post-prandial recreation.

CALIBAN

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MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

DRURY LANE. Wild Violets. Wed. & Sat.

DUCHESS. Children in Uniform. Wed., Sat.

GLOBE. Doctor's Orders. Wed. & Sat.

H'DROME. Dick Whittington. Daily 2.0.

LYRIC. Another Language. Wed. & Sat.

QUEEN'S. Head-On Crash. Sat.

ST. MARTIN'S. The Green Bay Tree. Tu., F.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Tem. 6404. Mon. Next, at 8.
RALPH LYNN in
A BIT OF A TEST.
By Ben Travers.
Subs. Evgs., 8.15. Mats., Wed., Fri., 2.30.

COLISEUM. Charing Cross. Tem. Bar 3161.
TWICE DAILY, at 2.30 & 8.15.
Sir Oswald Stoll presents Erik Charell's
CASANOVA. Last Night, Jan. 28th.
Feb. 2 Ballet, Vaudeville & Divertissement.

DRURY LANE. Evgs., 8.15. Mats., Wed., Sat., 2.30.
HASSARD SHORT'S production of
WILD VIOLETS.
A Musical Comedy Operetta. Tem. 7171.

DUCHESS, Aldwych, W.C.2. Tem. Bar 8243 & 4.
Evenings, 8.30. Mats., Wed., & Sat. at 2.30.
CHILDREN IN UNIFORM.
English Adaptation of *MADCHEN IN UNIFORM.*

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. TUES. next, 8.15, subs. 8.30.
YVONNE ARNAUD and RAYMOND MASSEY in
"DOCTOR'S ORDERS."
First Mat., Feb. 4th, 2.30, subs., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272. Daily, 2 & 7.45.
Julian Wylie's Production,
DICK WHITTINGTON
with FAY COMPTON & LESLIE HENSON.

LYRIC. Shaftesbury Av., W.1. Evenings, 8.40.
ANOTHER LANGUAGE.
HERBERT MARSHALL. CELIA JOHNSON.
Mats., Wed., Sat., 2.30.

QUEEN'S. (Ger. 4517.) Wed., Feb. 1, at 8.
(Subsequently 8.30). First Mat., Feb. 4, at 2.30.
BARRY JACKSON presents
HEAD-ON CRASH. By Laurence Miller.
CEDRIC HARDWICKE. FLORA ROBSON.

ST. MARTIN'S. (Tem. Bar 1443).
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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A course of three Lectures on "SPACE PERCEPTION" will be given by H. W. B. JOSEPH, M.A. (Fellow of New College, and late Lecturer in Philosophy in the University of Oxford), at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (Gower Street, W.C.1) on MONDAYS, FEBRUARY 6th, 13th and 20th, at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Professor J. MACMURRAY, M.C., M.A. (Grote Professor of Philosophy of Mind and Logic in the University).

A course of three Lectures on "SOME ASPECTS OF THE DICTION OF ENGLISH POETRY" will be given by Professor H. C. K. WYLD, B.Litt., M.A. (Merton Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of Oxford), at WESTFIELD COLLEGE (Hampstead, N.W.3) on THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 9th, 16th and 23rd, at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Professor R. W. CHAMBERS, M.A., D.Lit., F.B.A. (Quain Professor of English Language and Literature in the University).

A Lecture on "INTERNATIONAL LAW IN PRACTICE" will be given by SIR WILLIAM MALKIN, K.C.M.G., C.B., K.C., at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2), on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, at 5.30 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE, WITHOUT TICKET.

S. J. WORSLEY,
Academic Registrar.

WOMEN AND THE CRISIS: THE WAY OUT. Four Lectures arranged by the Fabian Society (Women's Group) at Caxton Hall, S.W.1, on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m.

8th Feb. The Duchess of Atholl, M.P. CONSERVATISM.
22nd Feb. Mr. Harry Pollitt, COMMUNISM.
8th March. Mr. Geoffrey Mander, M.P. LIBERALISM.
22nd March. Miss Ellen Wilkinson. SOCIALISM.

Tickets, 1s. 3d. each; course tickets, 4s. Syllabuses free.

Apply Secretary, F.W.G., 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.

THE 'X' SOCIETY, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.2, Wednesday evening, Feb. 1st, 8 p.m. Mr. G. E. O. KNIGHT. THE RAPE OF MANCHURIA. Admission Free.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.—Sunday, January 29th, at 11 a.m.
JOHN A. HOBSON, M.A.
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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE NEXT CONFERENCE—AND WALL STREET—STERLING AND THE CANADIAN DOLLAR—TOBACCO SHARES AND OTHERS

"THE economic system of the United States," said the chairman of the National City Bank of New York to his assembled shareholders this month, "is essentially sound, the most efficient in the world, and capable of providing a higher standard of living for the people than yet has been known in any country." As this distinguished banker is not reported on the casualty list I presume that he was not heard by any of the twelve million unemployed in America. Our own bank chairmen are displaying better form. The joint stock banks may not be nationalised, but Mr. F. C. Goodenough, chairman of Barclays, in his speech last week showed that they had the national spirit. No further payments of war debts to America, was Mr. Goodenough's slogan, until a final agreement had been reached, and no return to the gold standard until "we had grounds for confidence in our ability to maintain our position." Mr. Roosevelt's invitation to Great Britain for a war debts conference in March, with powers to "discuss methods of improving the world situation," is of interest to the equity share markets in New York rather than in London. There is clearly no advantage in our returning to the gold standard before everyone else has come off. When Mr. Roosevelt speaks of "improving the world situation," he should not forget that there are two worlds—the gold standard and the sterling world—and that under present monetary conditions it is impossible for stabilisation to improve the situation in one without damaging the situation in the other. Hence, currency stabilisation should be barred in the forthcoming discussions with Mr. Roosevelt. The only topic, outside war debts, should be tariffs.

* * *

If Mr. Roosevelt has learnt his lessons, well and good, but he has to convince his Congress that the world slump was mainly caused by the failure of America to play the part of a great creditor nation. If America, by her tariff policy, will not allow debtor foreign countries to earn dollars in her markets, she must lend them the dollars for the payment of their debts or else expect bad debts and the loss of her own export trade. The following figures of American external trade and loans tell their own story :—

000,000's omitted.

	Exports.	Imports.	Export Surplus.	New Foreign Security Issues.
	$	$	$	$
1929	5,241	4,399	842	759
1930	3,843	3,061	782	1,010
1931	2,424	2,091	333	255
1932	1,618	1,323	295	0

Mr. Benjamin Anderson, the economist of the Chase National Bank, has been preaching to American business men that they must lower their tariffs so that foreign customers can sell goods in American markets and buy in turn from the depressed agricultural and other exporting industries of America. If these are also Mr. Roosevelt's views, the discussions at the war debts conference in March may be fruitful. If not, the conference will be a waste of time. On this issue depends, in my opinion, the immediate future of Wall Street. The post-election recovery fizzled out because Mr. Roosevelt refused to co-operate with Mr. Hoover on war debts or show any constructive bent in world affairs. If Mr. Roosevelt again fails to play the statesman's part, I fear that Wall Street is marked out for another break and panic. The position of America is really desperate.

* * *

The Exchange Equalisation Account must now be showing a handsome profit. Having been forced to acquire sterling in the exchange market when nervous foreigners were rushing to sell their £'s down to $3.14 not so long ago it has now been obliged to buy foreign currencies at rates rising from $3.30 to $3.40 to the £ as the same nervous foreigners are rushing to dispose of dollars and francs. It is flattering to Great Britain, but it reflects panic and speculation abroad rather than confidence in sterling or the seasonal improvement of our trade balance. The French budget crisis has been responsible for a minor flight from the franc, for M. Chéron, the Finance Minister, relying on Socialist support, is proposing drastic income and capital taxes. At the same time, the inflationist parties in America are gathering strength and there is a growing fear that Congress will be driven into devaluation of the dollar or crude inflation of the note issue. The demand for pounds was so insistent on Tuesday of this week that the "control" was temporarily removed and the rate allowed to move from $3.37 to $3.40. The Exchange Equalisation Fund, which has just exchanged some of its foreign currency for gold, which in turn has been "bought" by the Bank of England, cannot go on buying foreign currencies for ever, and we must view with some alarm the prospect of this country being "stampeded" back to the gold standard by American and French speculators. Above a rate of 3.40, however, buying of dollar bonds from London may develop and ease the strain. Perhaps even Mr. Liggett's Boots shares may be paid for. But I would caution investors against buying Canadian dollar bonds. Some carry the option of payment in American gold dollars. Some do not. The Canadian dollar has been suspiciously weak and the inflationist party in Canada is particularly strong. If the Canadian dollar is forced by a flight of Canadian capital into parity with sterling, the Canadian Government may default on its American debt and all Canadian companies with a heavy load of gold debt payable in America will be in trouble.

* * *

Let us pull out our pipes and discuss tobacco shares. It is in many ways a fantastic industry—that such vast expenditure of capital, labour and thought should all go up in smoke. Four leading cigarette manufacturers in America spent in 1931 between $50 and $60 millions in advertising, and after paying all debenture interest and prior charges, earned over $110½ millions. In the same year the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain earned nearly £10 millions. The same troubles are being experienced in both the American and British industries—higher taxation, smaller consumption, increased competition and price-cutting. In America the wholesale price of cigarettes has just been reduced from $6.85 to $6 per 1,000. Competition from the cheaper brands of cigarettes has been particularly severe in both countries. In Great Britain Carreras introduced "Clubs," a five for 2d. cigarette with coupons, to compete with "Woodbines," and the Imperial Tobacco was forced into a counter-offensive with a five for 2d. cigarette called "Four Aces," with the coupons which it had hitherto denounced. In America the British American Tobacco Company, the export subsidiary of the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain, upset the leading American manufacturers with its 10-cent packets. Every American company, however, has been able to offset to some extent price-cuts by the lower cost of leaf tobacco. The preliminary figures of the Imperial Tobacco of Great Britain indicate a fall in profits of £1,230,000 or 12½ per cent. Dividends have been cut to the same level as British American Tobacco, namely 20 per cent. tax free for the year. The prices of the respective shares are, however, out of line. At 5⅛xd, British American yields £3 18s. per cent. net and £5 4s. per cent. gross and Imperial Tobacco at 98s. 1½d. cum. final dividend £4 3s. 10d. per cent. net and £5 11s. 10d. per cent. gross. The Imperial Tobacco profits have, of course, been affected by the lower dividend paid on its holdings of British American Tobacco, but it has been evident that the increasing sales of such independent companies as Carreras, J. Wix, and Gallaher have been at the expense of Imperial Tobacco Company.

* * *

A reader asks for suggestions for an investment in ordinary shares which are not already overvalued on prospects. The Actuaries Investment Index discloses the fact that the average return on British ordinary shares is now under £4 6s. per cent. As compared with a year ago, the rise has been extraordinary :—

Actuaries Investment Index.

British Ordinary Shares	Dividend Yields % Dec., 1931	 Jan. 17, 1933
Productive	5.80	3.71
Distributive	6.71	4.19
Miscellaneous	7.83	4.78
All Classes (144 shares)	6.94	4.29

We must grow accustomed to low investment yields while our investment markets remain insulated by the depreciation in the £. As long as capital is unable to move freely about the various markets where it can earn the highest returns, so long will interest yields in Great Britain remain out of line with those abroad. And as long as the market believes that our exporters will obtain a gradually increasing share of a diminishing volume of world trade, British industrial ordinary shares will continue to receive support in the expectation of better earnings. But I advise extreme discrimination. The following shares are at any rate yielding good returns :—

	Finan. Yr. Ends.	Last reported Earned %	Paid %	Present Price.	Approx. Yield %
1 Tate and Lyle £1 ...	30 Sept.	26.5	16	59/6	£5 7 6
2. Spillers def. £1 stock	... 31 Jan.	22.7	10	32/6	£6 3 0
3. National Canning £1	... 31 May	20.2	12½	45/3	£5 10 6
4. Unilever £1 ...	... 31 Dec.	14.8	8	31/-	£7 8 6*

*If florins collected at 8.40.

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For particulars apply to the BURSAR.

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The University, Edmund Street, Birmingham. C. G. BURTON, Secretary.
January, 1933.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.
Required for inclusion in panels of staff eligible for employment in evening institutes from September, 1933, experienced lecturers competent to give advanced courses of weekly lectures covering one, two or three terms, on humanistic subjects related to literature and the drama, aesthetics, anthropology and comparative religions, philosophy and ethics, history, mythology and folklore, ethnology, psychology, sociology, sciences and other subjects suitable for literary institutes. Titles of courses offered should be indicated and *outline syllabus enclosed with form.*
Rate of pay for two hours' teaching (*plus* correction of students' written work), 22s. less 10 per cent., and liable to revision after March 31st, 1933. Apply on Form T.7/40, obtainable from EDUCATION OFFICER, The County Hall, S.E.1 (stamped addressed foolscap envelope necessary), to be returned by February 10th. Inclusion in panels is no guarantee of employment. Canvassing disqualifies.

ALTRINCHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.
APPOINTMENT OF LIBRARIAN.
Applications are invited for the appointment of Librarian and Secretary of the Public Hall.
Candidates must have had practical experience in modern Public Library work, and hold the Diploma by examination of the Library Association.
The salary paid will be that of the Lancashire & Cheshire Provincial Council's Scheme, Grade A (Professional, Technical and Administrative Division), according to qualifications.
The appointment will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government and other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, and to the successful candidate satisfactorily passing a medical examination for the purposes of that Act.
Applications, on forms to be obtained from the undersigned, together with copies of two testimonials, should be addressed to the Chairman of the Staffs Committee, Town Hall, Altrincham, endorsed "Librarian," and must be received not later than Wednesday, the 15th February, 1933.
Canvassing, directly or indirectly, will disqualify.
Town Hall, Altrincham. A. GLOSSOP, Clerk to the Council.
27th January, 1933.

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